THE REGENT'S CANAL

ACTION PLAN

Update - May 2001

British Waterways

London's Waterway Partnership

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REGENT'S CANAL

Vision statement

Access for All

The
Regent's
Canal Action
Plan is about
people.
The people who live and
work around the canal and
those who wish to enjoy its
unique qualities for travel,
recreation, stimulation or relaxation.

The canal experience should offer choice
and opportunity in an environment that is
accessible to all and that is safe and enjoyable.
This is what the plan seeks to achieve.

Comprehensive and co-ordinated improvements that
extend across administrative boundaries and into communities
are needed. In this way the Regent's Canal can fulfil it's potential
as a major, strategic recreational resource for central London.

Community
safety

Canal
Experience

1.1 Need for an Action Plan

This study was produced in response to recognition of the need to re-vitalise the Regent's Canal as an important and historic east-west transport and recreation corridor crossing London. Its significance as a strategic route is exemplified by the fact that the Regent's Canal passes through five London Boroughs and connects to: in the west, the 2000 miles of national waterway system; to the River Thames and the Lee Navigation in the east.

The Action Plan is primarily supported by British Waterways' London Canals Business Unit and London's Waterway Partnership but also includes specialist input from several other key contributors notably The Fieldfare Trust, the Metropolitan Police, the London Ecology Unit and British Waterway's Environmental & Scientific Services consultancy.

The study has been funded through London's Waterway Partnership SRB and by British Waterways' London Region. Delivery of the actions and proposals will also draw from London's Waterway Partnership SRB monies but be match funded wherever possible by the five London Boroughs, private developers, other funding initiatives and business.

There has also been preliminary liaison with community and user groups, canvassing views of the London's Waterways Partnership Community Project Managers, developers, discussions with a range of London based organisations, environmental analysis, a review of the relevant Unitary Development Plan policies and associated local initiatives and developments.

Several factors contribute to an under use and lack of 'engagement' with the canal by Londoners and visitors alike. A combination of problems of access particularly for people with disabilities, lack of information, a perceived fear of crime as well as sections where the canal environment is degraded, contribute to an overall issue of poor image.

One of the canal's greatest assets, however, is that it forms a 'continuum' across a fascinating part of London. This can be described in an historical as well as geographical sense. The canal has close associations with its surrounding communities and is interwoven with the rich history of each of the five London Boroughs it passes through.

There is presently a new wave of regeneration spreading across London and London's Waterways have become the focus for much of this activity. This action plan for the Regent's Canal aims to take advantage of these opportunities to re-engage existing and new communities with the Regent's Canal as a unique, linear recreational resource, to address some of it's image problems and ensure its vitality into the future.

The study presented in this document is in three sections:

Section 1 - Context

Section 2 – Survey and Analysis

Section 3 – Strategic Action Plan

1.2 Action Plan, Objectives and Project Brief

The flow diagram on the opposite page:

- Places the Action Plan in the context of the five themes supporting the London's Waterway Partnership SRB programme
- Summarises the key plan objectives
- Sets out the fundamental aspects of the Delivery Framework.

The following is a summary of the project brief:

Aim: *To prepare a comprehensive and carefully targeted document that aims to secure benefits and improvements for local communities and the range of canal users by focussing on the Regent's Canal as a strategic recreational resource passing through the heart of London.*

Key objectives

- Reengage existing and engaging new communities with the Regent's Canal;
- Identify the existing problems of access to the canal for people with disabilities;
- Identify actions to improve safety and reduce the fear of crime;
- Capitalise on the canal as a linear recreational resource by identifying a co-ordinated range of environmental improvements;
- Recommend ways of improving the visitor experience – to encourage tourism;
- Identify the full development potential of land-use adjacent to the canal;
- Explore ways of interpreting the canal's heritage for a wider audience;
- Recognise ways of protecting and increasing the canal's bio-diversity;
- Highlight physical and strategic links and associations between the canal and neighbouring leisure and recreational amenities;
- Assemble a delivery framework that considers long-term management issues and includes a suggested approach to support community involvement;

Scope of Action Plan

The action plan is formatted for delivery at two levels:

1. Strategic actions and proposals that cover the whole of the canal (from the eastern end of the Maida Vale tunnel to Limehouse Basin);
2. Local actions and proposals within the five London Borough administrative areas; City of Westminster, London Borough of Camden, London Borough of Islington, London Borough of Hackney, London Borough of Tower Hamlets. In addition to areas abounding the canal where key complementary improvement initiatives are underway or specific developments are taking place.

Vision

An overall vision for the Regent's Canal Action Plan is given on the facing page.

REGENT'S CANAL

1 Introduction

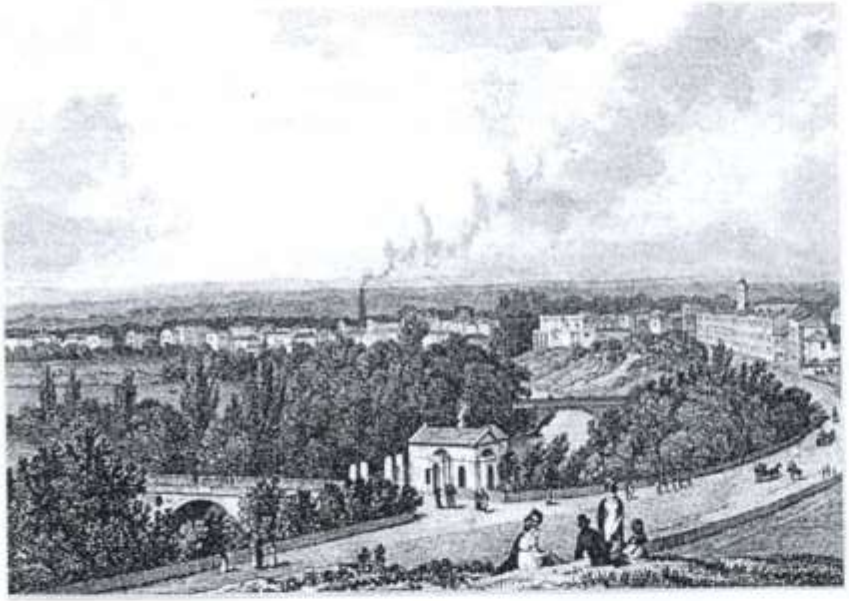
REGENT'S CANAL

1.3 Background

London's urban character, social diversity and attractiveness as a tourist destination is forever evolving. The capital's different districts and communities contribute to this changing experience as a place in which to live, work and visit.

Within this urban 'mix' it is unusual to find an attractive, strategic and sustainable, recreational resource that has the potential to link districts, communities and tourist attractions whilst at the same time being an attraction in itself. The Regent's Canal embodies all of these qualities.

A look at a map of London circa 1836 shows the city's northern limit defined by the Regent's Canal. Then, it passed through open countryside between Paddington in the west and Limehouse in the east



The view above is from Primrose Hill in the 18th century and shows the Regent's Canal before London grew up around it.

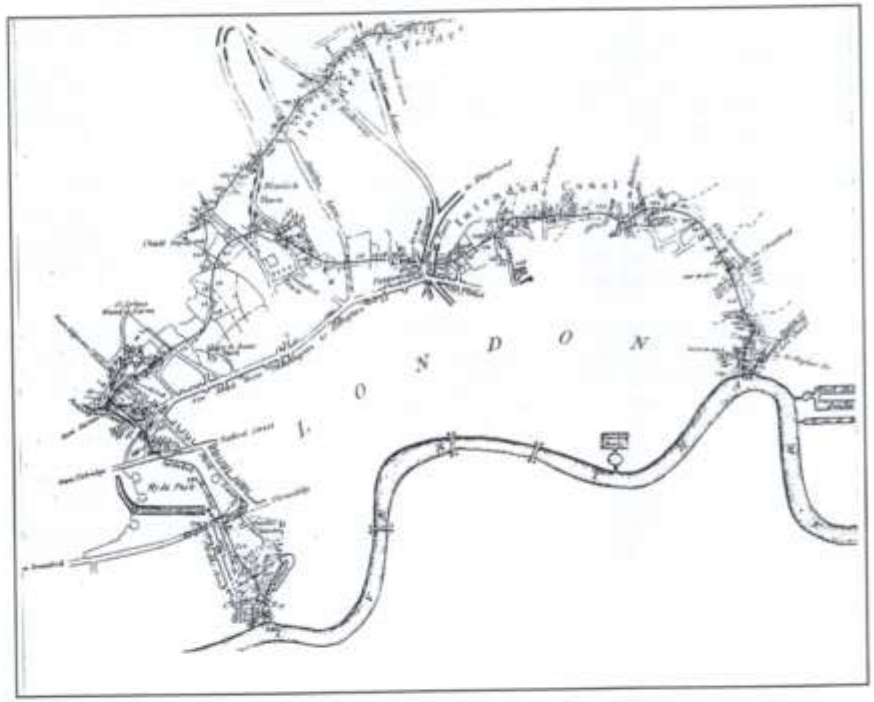
Today's maps show the Regent's Canal surrounded by nearly two centuries of housing and industrial development punctuated in the west and east by royal and municipal parks respectively. The canal in part facilitated and fuelled this change.

At a distance of often less than two miles the Regent's Canal circumscribes the City of London. It passes through five London Boroughs on its eight and a half mile route linking the east and west 'ends' of the Capital. An historic polarity persists between these two parts of London and the canal is a unique but relatively underused link between the two.

1.4 Historical Development

The Regent's Canal was primarily a speculative venture but arose from the need in the 1800s to move industrial goods more efficiently across London. At this time the Grand Junction Canal terminated at Paddington whilst at the same time a shipping dock was being developed on the Thames at Limehouse in the east. Goods were offloaded and transported along the New Road through Islington (now Marylebone and Euston Road).

The proposal for the canal was also an integral part of the architect John Nash's masterplan for the West End. It was through his friendship with the Prince Regent that the Prince agreed to give his title to the canal. This legacy of Regency town planning remains in the grand urban forms of Regent's Park and Regent's Street.



The map above shows the canal skirting around the Marylebone Park Estate – later Regent's Park. It then heads eastwards through Camden Town and Islington and towards Hackney which were then villages.

Action Plan Objectives and Delivery Plan

REGENTS CANAL ACTION PLAN

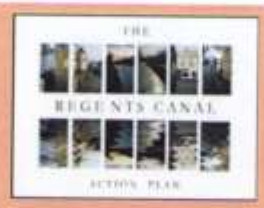
London Waterways Partnership

SRB Programme

London wide improvement programme for London's Waterways focusing on five main themes:

1. **Business and employment opportunities**
2. **Tourism**
3. **Water quality and Pollution issues**
4. **Links to Schools, Communities and Training Agencies**
5. **Strategic links**

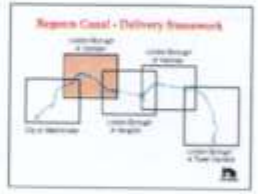
Regent's Canal Action Plan



Action Plan objectives:

- Re-engage existing and new communities with the canal
- Address existing problems of access all and identify actions to improve safety and reduce the fear of crime
- Recommend a co-ordinated range of environmental improvements to encourage tourism and improve the visitor experience
- Explore ways of interpreting the canal's heritage to a wider audience
- Recognise and develop ways of increasing the canal's bio-diversity
- Highlight physical links and associations between the canal and neighbouring leisure and recreational amenities

Delivery stage



When: 2000 - 2004

Who:
- British Waterways
- London Borough's
- Business Partnerships
- Groundwork Trusts
- Complementary SRB regeneeration and 'New Deal' Initiatives
- Lower Lea Project

What: Action Plan proposals and findings of Community Consultation programme

How:
- Local actions specific to individual London Boroughs
- Strategic cross-Borough actions

Next Steps:
1. Community engagement and support
2. Continuing partnerships
3. Action for canal enhancement
4. Regents Canal Heritage Lottery bid
5. Maintenance and Management agreements

REGENT'S CANAL

British Waterways

Regent's Canal context within London Waterways

REGENT'S CANAL

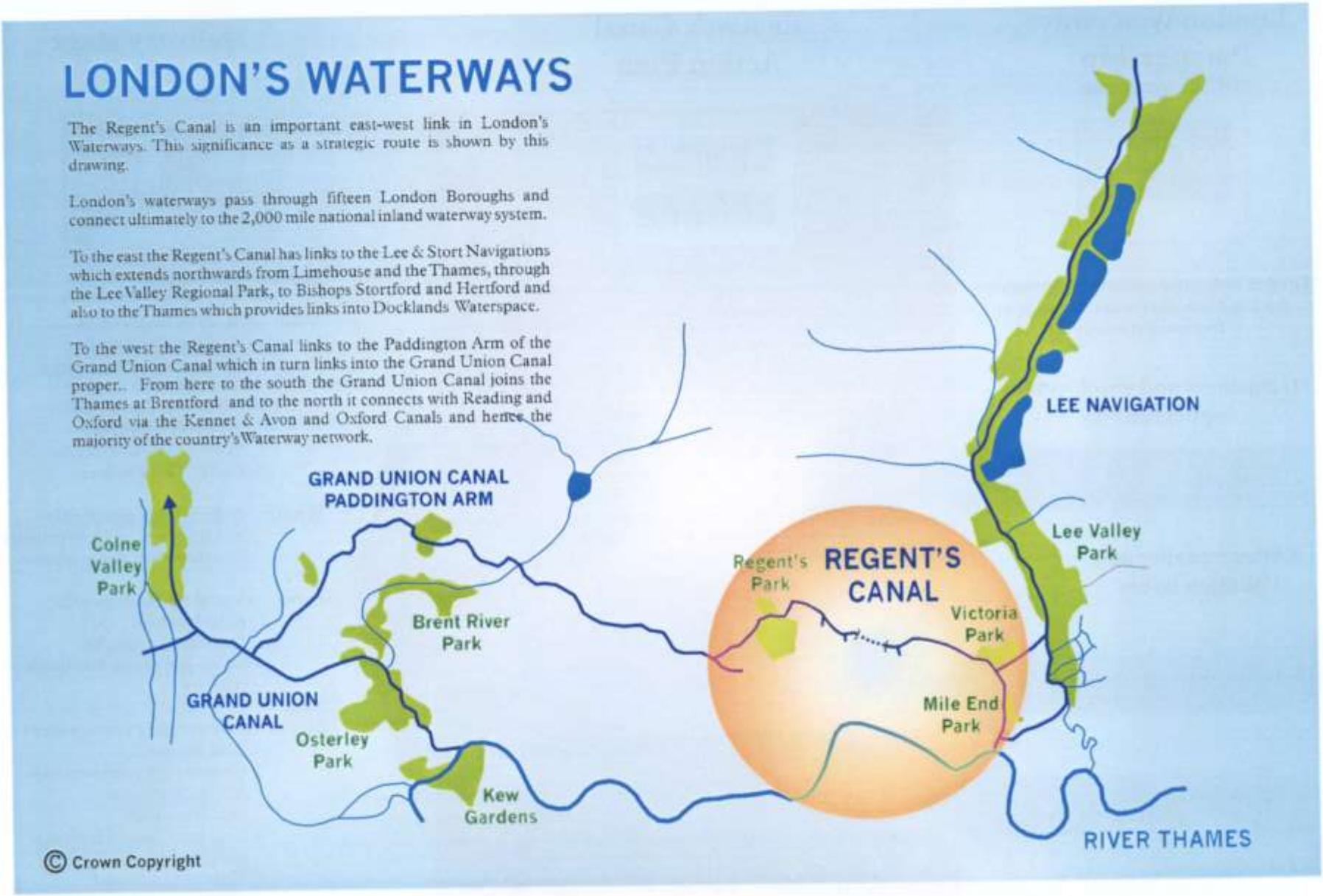
LONDON'S WATERWAYS

The Regent's Canal is an important east-west link in London's Waterways. This significance as a strategic route is shown by this drawing.

London's waterways pass through fifteen London Boroughs and connect ultimately to the 2,000 mile national inland waterway system.

To the east the Regent's Canal has links to the Lee & Stort Navigations which extends northwards from Limehouse and the Thames, through the Lee Valley Regional Park, to Bishops Stortford and Hertford and also to the Thames which provides links into Docklands Waterspace.

To the west the Regent's Canal links to the Paddington Arm of the Grand Union Canal which in turn links into the Grand Union Canal proper.. From here to the south the Grand Union Canal joins the Thames at Brentford and to the north it connects with Reading and Oxford via the Kennet & Avon and Oxford Canals and hence the majority of the country's Waterway network.



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In 1837 the London & Birmingham Railway was completed terminating at Euston and crossing the canal in the process. The railways quickly out-competed the canals as a way of transporting goods. The Regent's Canal never repaid its optimistic investors. In January 1963 British Waterways took over responsibility for it.

The canal now has 'cruiseway' status and is used primarily by leisure and trip boats. On average there are 8000 boat movements a year and only 225 boats are registered to the Regent's Canal.

Each of the five London Borough's Unitary Development Plans recognise the canals recreational, heritage and ecological importance. There are specific but differing designations and policies in each plan that relate to the canal.

Despite these recognised unique qualities the canal has never realised its full potential as a recreational resource for either local communities or users. It suffers from problems of access particularly for people with disabilities; a perceived fear of crime; degrees of anti-social behaviour and a general image problem.

1.5 The Current Scene - Facts and figures

The following statistics give an outline indication of some of the issues concerning the Regent's Canal today . These are embodied in this Action Plan:

- It is estimated that disabled people make-up approximately 20% of the population.
- Currently three million informal visits are made to the Regent's Canal each year.
- 44,000 anglers a year visit the Regent's.
- 125,000 cyclists use the canal towpath each year.
- 8000 boat movements a year take place on the Regent's.
- Islington has 2% of London's tourism accommodation.
- 28% of Islington's population speak a language other than English.
- Trip boats on the Regent's Canal carry 115,000 passengers a year.

Go to Section 3 - Users

- Only 15% of criminal acts are pre-planned, with the remaining 85% being opportunistic.
- Westminster is the focus of London's tourist industry and has 45% of the capital's bedspaces.
- Age and disability are related – Westminster has 6,000 people registered as disabled, but it is likely that this is probably an unrealistic estimate.
- The housing estates in Hackney referred to in this report are all in the DETR's 1,000 most deprived estates in the UK.
- Only 225 boats are registered on the Regent's Canal.

Go to Section 4 – User Issues

- 2 million households live within a five mile radius of London's canals.
- 5 million people of ethnic origin live within 5 miles of London's canals.
- King's Cross railway lands site is potentially the largest development site in Europe.
- Camden Market is a premier London tourist attraction.

Go to Section 5 - Planning

- The canal has been endorsed as 'Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation' by the London Ecology Unit.
- Locks on the Regent's Canal use 250 tonnes of water with each operation.

Go to Section 7 – Ecology

2 CONTEXT

2 Context

2.1 Project Partners

The following section gives details of the main project partners, complementary initiatives and supporting strategies associated with or specifically to do with the Regent's Canal.

2.1.1 London's Waterway Partnership SRB 3 – London's Waterways: A Catalyst For Regeneration

London's Waterway Partnership (LWP) is a London wide strategic alliance of the public and private sector centred on 50 miles of canal and river corridor. The aim of the LWP is to co-ordinate effort and provide the strategic framework for the regeneration of London's Waterways under the Government's Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) initiative. The above programme was initially approved by the Government Office for London in December 1996.

The London's Waterway Partnership vision is that... *'London's Waterway network becomes a focus for economic and environmental regeneration, linking centres of vibrant commercial activity with areas of urban tranquillity and open space, building on the existence of a rich and varied working waterway heritage.'*

The London's Waterway Partnership has taken a strategic overview of London's waterways and developed a programme of five complementary themes:

- Developing business and employment opportunities;
- Developing tourism and leisure;
- Addressing the quality of the water corridor;
- Focusing on local communities;
- Creating strategic links.

Through these themes the London's Waterway Partnership plans to promote sustainable regeneration, improving and protecting the environment.

2.1.2 British Waterways – London Canals Business Plan 1999/00 – 2003/04

British Waterways

Overview

The following is the waterway units business aspirations for London's waterways.

The Vision

London Canals will become a flagship waterway and a major tourism and heritage attraction. Centres of vibrant activity contrast with areas of peace and tranquillity to create a rich and varied environment to be enjoyed.

A programme of economic and environmental regeneration and business development, harnessing key partnerships and funding, particularly London's Waterway Partnership, will revitalise the waterway and raise its profile in the Capital City.

The Strategy

- Strengthen the identity of the waterway unit as a flagship waterway.
- Develop our business in the key areas of property and leisure to underpin our financial performance and sustain the business of the waterway.
- Further our business relationships and partnerships to raise our profile thereby securing external funding and development opportunities.
- Derive maximum benefit from London's Waterway Partnership to achieve the economic and environmental regeneration of the waterway corridor and expedite our development aspirations.
- Develop the moorings business providing quality new mooring sites to meet excess demand, revising our pricing policy and implementing a high standard of maintenance.
- Implement a PR and marketing strategy which promotes the canals as a 'must-see' tourism destination in conjunction with an events programme focusing on our role in 'London Millennium City'.
- Improve availability and accessibility to a wider range of customer groups ensuring issues of public safety are fully addressed and using this opportunity to improve the quality of the waterway environs.

- Establish better community links through liaison and education initiatives to engage local people in the regeneration and environmental protection of their canals.
- Improve the quality of the waterway environment and customer facilities in line with waterway standards that befit the Capital City and which are consistent with the objectives of the Contract with Government.
- Implement a customer services policy which instils a sense of pride and excellence in all staff.
- Develop the staff team through training and empowerment to encourage greater understanding of all aspects of the waterway business.
- Develop an Environmental Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan within the context of the Environmental Code of Practice.
- Raise the profile of the Regent's Canal as a major heritage attraction, highlighting the rich and varied working waterway heritage as a resource to be explored.

2.1.3 The Fieldfare Trust

The Fieldfare Trust are a charitable organisation who work to improve access to the countryside and environmental education for disabled people across the UK. It gives training and consultancy advice to people who provide countryside services, and also runs projects which give disabled people the chance to take part in countryside activities.

The Fieldfare Trust were invited by British Waterways to provide an assessment of some of the existing constraints to access for people with disabilities coupled with local and strategic recommendations to improve access to the Regent's Canal.

The following is the brief agreed with Fieldfare:

The Brief to the Fieldfare Trust

To contribute as a project partner to British Waterways' development of a Waterway Action Plan for the Regent's Canal (see attached); supporting British Waterways in its aim to identify and maximise the opportunities for disabled people to benefit equally from their approach to and management of the Regent's Canal.

- Identify and promote opportunities for the involvement of disabled people in the process;
- Produce a summary access audit of the Regent's Canal which gives a clear indication of the primary issues for physical access for disabled people;
- Produce more detailed access auditing to key sections of the canal (agreed with British Waterways) which identify the actions required to improve both physical and programme access;
- Ensure the integration of access for people with disabilities into both the action plan and British Waterways approach to its delivery;
- Provide guidance on the accessibility of the document to be produced;
- Raise awareness and continually reinforce the physical and programme access issues for disabled people to both British Waterways' and its partners in the delivery of improvements to the Regent's Canal;
- Ensure that the work programmed to 'enhance the visitor experience' illustrates an appropriate balance between physical and programme access;
- Provide guidance on the inclusion/integration of access for people with disabilities within a future Heritage Lottery Fund (or similar) application.

The delivery of specific outputs are to match the timescale agreed with British Waterways, the influencing activities to be maintained throughout the project and, an executive summary to be produced at the conclusion of the demonstration project as guidance on the work's future implementation in the light of experience in the process which developed it.

2.1.4 Metropolitan Police

British Waterways has also invited the Metropolitan Police to carry out Crime Prevention Surveys along those particular sections of the canal under the jurisdiction of London Borough Police Stations.

The Crime Prevention Design Advisers from the following Police Stations have contributed detailed local knowledge, assessments of opportunities for criminal and anti-social behaviour along with suggested crime prevention improvements:

- Marylebone Police Station (Westminster);
- Kentish Town Police Station (Camden);
- Islington Police Station (Islington);
- Stoke Newington Police Station (Hackney);
- Limehouse Police Station (Tower Hamlets Borough Police Division).

The Crime Prevention Design Advisor for the Metropolitan Police based at Albany Street Police Station has recently produced a report titled *Regent's Canal: Suggested Crime Prevention Improvements*. The report sets out to:

- Identify the nature of criminal activity along the waterways;
- The causes of crime and the fear of crime;
- The most appropriate and effective way of dealing with crime prevention in new and existing developments given the unique and historic context of London's waterway corridors.

The findings of that report have been incorporated into this document the recommendations falling under the following headings:

- More clearly defined location points;
- Increased and better sign posting;
- Encouragement of greater activity on the canalside;
- Removing the drinkers and drug dealers;
- Better lighting of the canal;
- Increased and better access onto the canal.

In conjunction with the Metropolitan Police British Waterways have also produced a corporate guidance document entitled *'Under Lock and Quay'*. It highlights the importance of the design and planning process as the optimum long-term solution to reducing levels of criminal activity on waterways.

Although general to designing out crime throughout London's waterways its content has also informed the proposals in this Action Plan for the Regent's Canal.

2.1.5 London Ecology Unit in conjunction with British Waterways' Environment and Scientific Services

The following are the findings by the London Ecology Unit:

The London Ecology Unit holds a range of survey data for the Regent's Canal. This wealth of data has been interpolated by Environment and Scientific Services to suggest ways of enhancing the wildlife value of the canal:

As well as specific habitat improvements contained in the Action Plan summary tables the London Ecology Unit & Environment and Scientific Services have identified a series of management objectives which can be summarised as follows to:

- enhance aquatic vegetation and structural diversity in selected locations in the canal;
- enhance the diversity of terrestrial vegetation in selected parts of the land adjacent to the canal;
- improve the safety and perceived safety of the towing path with the aid of suitable planting;
- enhance the educational value of the canal for all ages through interpretative material;
- improve the appearance of certain sections of the canal;
- aim for equal opportunities regarding access;
- set up funded maintenance structures;
- monitor the effectiveness of the actions undertaken to implement the objectives above.

2.2 Complementary Regeneration Initiatives

The study has identified the following complementary initiatives relevant to the Regent's Canal that support the objectives and recommendations in this action plan.

2.2.1 Thames 21 - Thames 21's First Appraisal of Local Environmental Quality on the Regent's Canal

Thames 21 is part funded by the Princes Trust and part London's Waterway Partnership SRB. It was previously known as ThamesClean, is an independently constituted joint initiative formed in April, 1968 between Tidy Britain Group, the Port of London Authority, the Environment Agency, Thames Water Utilities Ltd and the Corporation of London to address the problems of poor local environment quality on the Thames and its tributaries.

Recently, the inner London Probation Service approached Thames 21 with a millennium project to extend this work to rivers and canals throughout London. The London's Waterway Partnership has part funded this project.

At the request of the London Waterways Partnership, during January 1999 Thames 21 undertook an appraisal of the standard of cleanliness on the Regent's Canal through the London Borough of Camden section. The appraisal included the composition and sources of litter and wastes present and examined other environmental factors which might be reducing the efficiency of cleansing operations and which degrade local environmental quality on the Regent's Canal.

Thames 21's central conclusion was that the impression of the canal environment is one of decline and neglect and that a source of positive change and community ownership should be developed to encourage the canal's sensible use.

Their recommendations and specific conclusions are summarised below. Although the survey was restricted to the Camden area they can be applied to other sections of the canal in other London Boroughs. They included:

- Improving the cleansing operations, removing litter from underneath vegetation and instigating a regime against businesses identified to be not storing waste properly;
- Removal of existing information boards and considering their replacement;
- Instigating an Adopt-a-Canal scheme to involve local communities and business in the canal;
- Widespread graffiti clearance and application of a sacrificial layer to facilitate future cleaning;
- Distributing information about waste disposal to boat owners;
- Providing more litter bins at certain points and improving the cleansing of access points;
- Introducing a code of practice for contractors on the canal;
- Considering an anti-litter or anti-dog fouling campaign;
- Conducting further surveys of this nature.

2.2.2 The Groundwork Trusts

The individual Groundwork Trusts covering the Regent's Canal are independent charities non profit making companies, and company members of the Groundwork Foundation.

Groundwork undertakes environmental improvement projects in partnership with the local community – including the local authority, tenants associations, local businesses and community groups. They place great importance an active participation and involvement, particularly of those who live and work around the site of a project.

Groundwork Camden, Islington, Hackney (and the Lower Lea Project - see later) are already delivering environmental improvement programmes throughout the London Boroughs. These projects are primarily funded through London Borough and partnership Single Regenerative Budgets. London's Waterway Partnership have employed Community Project Managers for the four areas referred to who are the focus for the community based consultation and initiatives leading implementation of projects on the ground.

Groundwork condones the idea that the successful regeneration of the Regent's Canal should be one that involves the local community in partnership, building on principles of sustainability. They envisage that the project ideas would be worked up in line with this approach.

Some of the project proposals for site specific or defined areas included:

- Canal Ecology/landscape;
- Safety railings along the towing path;
- Graffiti treatment;
- Grants for boundary treatment and creation of 'Windows into the Canal' (where they affect private land);
- Information signs/interpretation boards;
- Underbridge lighting;
- Public art installations at all the entrance ways to the canal;
- Waterbus services Constitution Public House.

Some of the other SRB funded programmes that complement the improvements proposed for the Regent's Canal are outlined as follows. They are all potential match funding opportunities and project implementers.

2.2.3 Millennium Festivals – London's Waterway Heritage 2000

The Millennium Festival programme is being led by Groundwork and is fully endorsed by the London's Waterway Partnership. There will be one festival for each of the 15 London Boroughs. Local Steering groups have been established and the celebratory event s are to take place between April and November 2000. The theme is "Our Waterway, Past, Present and Future".

2.2.4 Lower Lea Project

The Lower Lea Project is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. It aims to support sustainable development and management of the Lower Lea Waterway environment for those who wish to use the area, but without compromising the value of the area a s a unique natural resource.

The project carries out direct waterway improvements, using it own staff and volunteers. It also seeks to work proactively with statutory and public sector bodies involved in the waterway management process a swell as regeneration agents and the private sector to enable and encourage bets practice in the management and use of the river network. Underpinning the work is the belief that the waterway communities have a role to play in the development of the area and that they should be meaningfully engaged in the waterway management process through community development and grass roots participation.

2.2.5 Kings Cross Partnership – A Vision for Kings Cross

The Kings Cross Partnership (KXP) was formed in April 1996 to focus regeneration effort in the two square kilometres centred on Kings Cross and St Pancras stations. This SRB programme straddles the boroughs of Camden and Islington.

The aim of the KXP is to co-ordinate effort and provide the strategic framework for the seven year regeneration programme in Kings Cross under the Governments Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) initiative. The Partnership brings together a broad range of private sector interests, the local community and the public sector including the two local authorities for the area.

The Kings Cross Partnership vision for Kings Cross is that it will:

- Be an important and successful part of a world city;
- Form a major interchange for travel, information and culture;
- Be a destination in its own right for a wide range of activities;
- Be a safe and pleasant place to live and work in, to travel through and to visit;
- Be a high quality environment with an accessible and integrated mix of uses;
- Be a tolerant multicultural community with excellent employment opportunities.

The Kings Cross Partnership has produced a strategic framework of how they intend to deliver the fundamental and lasting change by:

- Strengthening local communities;
- Encouraging a thriving economy;
- Creating a flourishing metropolitan centre;
- Promoting the area;
- Communicating the vision for the future of Kings Cross.

2.2.6 Stepney SRB Round 1

This SRB programme's boundaries are the canal in the east, Mile End Road in the north, Commercial Road in the west and Jubilee Street in the south. This encompasses the redevelopment area covered by SHADA who have been appointed to deliver the Housing Programme aspect of the SRB. The remaining elements of the programme are being co-ordinated by London Borough of Tower Hamlets. They are not targeted to a specific area. They include an Education Programme and a Health and Community Development Programme. This programme ends in December 2001.

2.2.7 Stepney Housing and Development Agency – SHADA

Stepney Housing and Development Agency came into being formally on 29th August 1997 as a non-charitable company, limited by guarantee, under the Companies Act 1985. As such SHADA do not normally own assets but have a Master Plan contract with Tower Hamlets Council to manage the Central Stepney SRB Housing Programme.

SHADA intend to spend £100 million over five years to meet the needs of local people by providing new and improved housing. Much of this abuts the Regent's Canal which separates it from the Mile End Park regeneration project. It is likely that grant aid will come from Europe rather than SRB.

SHADA has been set up in partnership with three other housing associations; Circle 33 Housing Trust; Bethnal Green and Victoria Park Housing Association.

2.2.8 Lisson Estate Action

Estate Action funded improvements to housing area adjacent to canal in the City of Westminster. Diageo are a potential contributor as well as City of Westminster.

2.2.9 New Deal for Shoreditch

This is a £320 million pound comprehensive New Deal for Communities regeneration programme for the Shoreditch area whose northern boundary is the Regent's Canal. The London Borough of Hackney is the Accountable Body and is forward funding the programme. Shoreditch New Deal Trust has been formed. Renaisi provide independent appraisal and undertake contracting, payment and monitoring services for the Trust

Key target areas are housing, Local Agenda 21, transport, community safety, employment, education and early years.

2.2.10 Ocean - New Deal for Communities

A £54 million pound comprehensive New Deal for Communities regeneration programme for the Ocean Estate whose eastern boundary is the Regent's Canal. The London Borough of Stepney is the Accountable Body and is forward funding the programme. Ocean Estate New Deal Trust has been formed. New Deal for Communities Ocean Estate are in partnership with SHADA whose target area lies to the south.

Key target areas are housing, Local Agenda 21, transport, community safety, employment, education and early years.

2.2.11 'RENAISI'

A not for profit company limited by guarantee, created in 1998 from the Dalston City Partnership and the Heart of Hackney project to deliver regeneration programmes within the London Borough of Hackney.

2.2.12 Safe Routes to School: Safe Routes for Communities

Three Year SRB funded to the tune of £950k London wide.

2.2.13 Haggerston Partnership

'Connecting Regeneration' SRB
Programme has three main themes:

- Community Safety – crime prevention and youth diversionary schemes based on the main housing estates;
- Reducing employment;
- Increasing business opportunities.

Projects include Geffrey Museum, Laburnum Boat Club, Broadway Market, Building Blocks (Action Plans and building projects on housing estates in Haggerston area).

2.2.14 Heart of Hackney Partnership

- 'Building on our Strengths' SRB
Broadway Market? Includes Crime prevention and estates regeneration – Broadway Market revitalisation is under this programme.

2.2.15 Lea Side & Poplar SRB 6 (Bid) –'Water City'

Although located on the Limehouse Cut – one key site is Bartlett Park where the proposal is to demolish 5 storey blocks, provide new build housing and link with the canal. In terms of strategic links it may be an opportunity to improve water borne

connections between this re-development and the Regent's Park particularly Mile End Park as a destination by water.

2.2.16 Freeform Arts Trust

A national charity combining the skills of artists and architects on projects involving local communities. FreeForm works to improve sustainable environments, both socially and physically. Based in Hackney since 1973 the company is organised as a practice offering consultancy services to multi-disciplinary team based projects particularly Local Authorities. It also initiates programmes funded by the DETR, Europe.

FreeForm have been commissioned by SHADA to input to the re-development area primarily between Victory Bridge and Salmon Lane Lock. FreeForm prepared a feasibility study for SHADA as part of the original bid. It is intended that they will be working with New Deal for Shoreditch. They have already been commissioned by East Thames Housing Association to work on the Alphabet Bridge along the Limehouse Cut.

Freeform are also working with the Peabody Trust on the 'Ten Estates ' project in the London Borough's of Islington and Camden.

2.2.17 City Fringe SRB 4

Led by the Corporation of London covers most of the New Deal for Shoreditch project area as well as parts of Camden, Islington, and Tower Hamlets. Funds are targeted at youth and community safety projects as well as training and business support.

2.2.18 The Public Art Development Trust (PADT) – A Strategic Plan for Public Art in Kings Cross

The PADT have been commissioned by the London Borough of Camden (LBC) and the Kings Cross Partnership (KXP) to produce a strategic plan for public art in the Kings Cross area. The timescale for this programme of public art will be for three years during 1999/2000 – 2001/2002.

PADT are undertaking approximately 20 consultations with a range of organisations working within the London Borough of Camden at a local, national and an international level.

KXP, LBC and PADT have identified five prime sites within the Kings Cross area for the proposed programme of public art. These are:

- Streetscape/gateway area between Euston and Kings Cross railway stations;
- Chalton Street, housing programme and courtyards;
- Channel Tunnel Rail Link terminal and surrounds;
- Regent's Canal;
- Barnsbury Estate.

The consultancy and resulting proposed programme of public art will consider the following:

- That work will include a community programme involving participatory projects with local schools, colleges, residents, business groups and will especially promote opportunities for ethnic minorities.
- Work will include a national and international programme involving artists of stature and profile who will be commissioned to create unique and innovative works that are likely to attract media interest in their proposals and in turn help promote the Kings Cross area.
- The proposed programme will also examine opportunities for including art within the major infrastructure developments in Kings Cross ranging from the proposed Channel Tunnel Rail Terminal at St Pancras to improvements to the local streetscape and the Regent's Canal as well as interim and long term uses for these sites.
- The proposed programme will embrace temporary as well as permanent projects.

2.2.19 Mile End Park

A major millennium funded project to create a major urban park for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The project has generated high profile interest and is both a focus and catalyst for regenerating surrounding neighbourhoods, particularly across and embracing the Regent's Canal.

2.2.20 Kings Cross 10 Estates – Peabody Trust

The project centres on the regeneration of ten housing estates; recently transferred to Peabody Trust from London Borough of Islington situated within an area bounded by Pentonville Road, Penton Street, Regent's Canal and Caledonian Road. These boundaries define the study area that the majority of our survey, analysis and recommendations have focused upon.

The masterplan study also encompasses the local area beyond the estates, looking at key facilities and access.

The estates have become rundown over a number of years, giving an air of neglect to parts of the neighbourhood. The poor state of repair, where entry control systems do not work and bin stores left unlocked, compound the problems by offering more opportunities for anti-social behaviour. The area feels particularly threatening at night

because of these problems. Their close proximity to Kings Cross means that drug and prostitution related crimes are rife.

This study aims to embrace the development requirements of not only Peabody Trust, but also of the Kings Cross Partnership. It intends to conform to the strategic aims of the local planning authority.

2.2.21 Queen Mary Westfield College – Campus Expansion

The Queen Mary Westfield College alongside the Regent's Canal in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets is planning a £35 million expansion and re-development of the campus. This will involve 800 residential places for students and consolidate the canal frontage. The college is keen to establish physical links across the canal to the Mile End Park development as well as closer 'links' with the local community.

2.3 Supporting Strategies

2.3.1 London Canals Committee – LCC Draft Strategy for the Canals

In 1997 London Canals Committee adopted a vision statement to bring about

"…. The enhancement, maintenance and restoration, wherever possible of the navigational use of London's canals; the improvement and maintenance of the canals' environment, ecology, heritage, and amenities; the promotion and generation of new recreational and regeneration initiatives".

This provided the focus for a report setting out a series of recommendations and a programme of action in relation to the key issues which the LCC had identified for consideration and resolution in relation to London's canal environment.

It is now intended that the strategy should become a working document subject to amendment, as each key issue is addressed and another arises. The LCC appreciates that even though they have taken the lead in producing the strategy, it is not in the LCC's power to carry out all the identified action. Nevertheless the recommendations would require the LCC to play a supporting role.

The key objectives put forward are to:

- promote, maintain and restore wherever possible the navigational use of London's canals;
- promote London's canals as a sustainable means of transport;
- encourage the sustainable improvement and maintenance of the canal's amenities;
- encourage the sustainable improvement and protection of the canal's environment and ecology.
- promote the establishment of regeneration and recreational initiatives which are sensitive to the canals traditional character.

2.3.2 Destination London

Working in partnership with the London Mayor and the Greater London Assembly

Document supporting the Greater London Assembly produced by the London Tourist Board and Convention Bureau. LTB is a private company owned by its 850 members. Role is to:

- Project London as a world class city for business and leisure;
- Advocate improvements to the infrastructure and services required to meet the needs of the visitor;
- Provide information to the visitor;
- Develop the tourism agenda and strategy for London in conjunction with major stakeholders.

2.3.3 London Waterway Partnership Tourism Strategy

Prepared by the London Canals Office and has three main objectives:

1. Developing the tourist product.
2. Marketing and raising the profile of the waterway network.
3. Improving and strengthening the waterway environment.

This strategy is expanded on in Section 3.

2.3.4 Health Action Zone

Covers Hackney and Tower Hamlets. Focuses on dealing with the main causes of ill health and the health dimension of getting people into jobs and will contribute bending health care services towards regeneration programmes.

The proposed programme will also identify implementation agents where possible, estimated costings, potential funding sources and an annual work schedule.

2.3.5 London Walking Forum

Organisation formed in 1990. It is a partnership between the Ramblers, London Planning Advisory Committee, Countryside Agency, Sports Council, Lee Valley Park and the Environment Agency.

2.3.6 Sustrans

Sustrans is a civil engineering transport charity whose title for 'sustainable transport' and its practical contribution to sustainable transport has been to design and build traffic free paths for cyclists, walkers and disabled people often on disused railways and

towpaths. In the last 15 years Sustrans has built over 480 kilometres of traffic free paths and already undertaken work on the British Waterways' network.

Over the last few years Sustrans has been developing the idea of a national network which will give benefits to the environment, to health, to the economy, to children, to the elderly and disabled people, and pedestrians and not least of all to cyclists. It is generally intended that the network will provide a route, generally 2 to 3 metres wide, designed for use by both cyclists and walkers with separation through busy stretches. It is intended the network will open up whole new routes for walkers particularly through urban areas where the presence of cyclists will add to the personal safety experienced by walkers. Attention will be paid through the Sustrans marketing programme to encourage responsible cycling behaviour towards pedestrians.

In order to fund the national cycle network Sustrans applied to the Millennium Commission for funds. The Commission awarded them some £42.5 million to fund the cost of what is now known as the Millennium Routes consisting of 4,000 kilometres of access to be built by at least the year 2000 with a further 6,400 kilometres to complete the national cycle network being completed by the year 2005.

It is anticipated the Millennium Routes will cost £183 million and thus Sustrans have received 23% grant towards this. Remaining funding will be raised from central and local transport funds, local authorities etc.

2.3.7 Greater London Authority – London's Mayor and Assembly

The key strategy areas that will be addressed by the Mayor and Assembly have a direct relationship with London's Waterways and therefore the Regent's Canal. The canals are important aspects of Londoners' lives, playing a valuable role in the economic, social and environmental well-being of the capital.

The GLA will cover the same geographical area as the 32 London Boroughs embracing five million electors, 10 Euro-constituencies and the Corporation of the City of London.

The Mayor and Assembly will take overall political and strategic responsibility for transport, economic development, policing and fire services in London.

Four separate agencies will be established, accountable to the GLA; Transport for London; London Development Agency; Metropolitan Police Authority and Fire and Emergency Planning.

The GLA will have eight areas of responsibility and over the coming years will develop strategies for each: Transport, Economic Development, Spatial Development, Biodiversity, Municipal Waste, Air Quality, Ambient Noise and Culture. With the exception of possibly 'Air Quality' and 'Ambient Noise' these strategy areas impact directly on the canal network.

Throughout the delivery stage of this Action Plan it will be important to work with the GLA and amend or introduce recommendations for improving the Regent's Canal in light of guidance from the GLA.

2.3.8 Education Pack for the Regent's Canal

This has been produced by the London Waterway as a way of establishing links and involvement with schools along and close to the Regent's Canal. It relates to the core areas of the national curriculum and is intended to inform and educate.

The project has been funded by the London Waterway's Partnership. The pack looks at the canal's heritage, ecology and communities, promoting it as a unique environment and an important resource for London.

2.3.9 London Cycling Campaign

Campaign for cyclists in London and have worked with Sustrans and Tower Hamlets in developing the Mile End Millennium Route that deploys a key section of the Regent's Canal towpath . There are opportunities to extend the cycle network to/from and across the Regent's Canal in numerous locations throughout all five Boroughs.

British Waterways hopes to work with the London Cycling Campaign to assist in this. This may include initiatives such as linking with Safe Routes to School and sustainable routes in and around the Kings Cross area as part of the Channel Tunnel Rail terminus.

3 CANAL USERS

British Waterways

3 Users

REGENT'S CANAL

3.1 Users - Setting the Context

The plan opposite shows the relationship of the Regent's Canal to the rest of central London and the City. What it reveals is how important it is as a recreational resource to visitors and local communities alike. It is a continuous recreational attraction linking the east and west ends of London, passing through the heart of the five London Boroughs and the City of London. The central section of the Regent's is just over a mile from the City and the River Thames. Approximately 50% of the remaining length is within two miles of the City.

It has been estimated that two million households live within a five mile radius of London's canals and that currently three million informal visits are made to the Regent's Canal each year. This suggests that the canal is well used but more probably these visits are restricted to particular locations such as Regent's Park and Camden Market.

Numerous and diverse communities live and work within minutes of the canal. Some of these areas exhibit low social indices and suffer from a difficulty in accessing recreational opportunities. Many of the more disadvantaged communities have inhabitants who themselves experience problems of mobility, low income and suffer from a fear of crime. Five million people of ethnic origin live within five miles of London's canals. Ethnic communities are equally prominent in all of the five London Boroughs along the Regent's.

Tourists and visitors experience the Regent's Canal more usually by boat. The total number of passengers carried annually on London's waterways by trip boat is one hundred and twenty two thousand (122,000). Again these visits are restricted to particular lengths and honey-pot tourist sites such as London Zoo and Camden Market.

All statistics can be misleading – the survey above may give the impression that the entire length of the Regent's Canal is well used and communities relate intimately with the canal environment. The findings of the survey and analysis investigating the three key 'themes' that drive this Action Plan demonstrate that this is not the case.

In order to make realistic recommendations and inform the long term management approach to the Regent's Canal as a widely used resource, an understanding of the different types of 'user' is required. A summary of the key users follows.

3.2 Pedestrians/Walking

A high proportion of the present estimated three million informal visits to the Regent's Canal are on foot. Most people use the canal to walk their dog, enjoy its more passive and natural environment as a contrast to the dense urban surroundings. An important aspect of the canal's attraction is that it is a 'neutral' environment that can be enjoyed by all members of society regardless of status, ethnic background and income. In this sense it can be equated to public open space and so provides recreational choice and opportunity for recreation. However this can also suggest indeterminate ownership. The latter can generate anti-social behaviour and in a limited way allow criminal activity to take place.

Walkers also use the towpath as a way of accessing other neighbourhoods to visit friends and family, as a route to school or work. The latter two uses are limited at present but particularly in the London Borough of Hackney and Tower Hamlets are activities to be encouraged. Refer to Section 5 Planning Guidance from the DETR on journeys to school and work. The City of London Corporation has carried out research linking healthy, efficient workers with ease of access to work.

Organised recreational/walking events also currently take place along the Regent's Canal between Regent's Park and Camden an annual event called 'Strolathan' follows the towpath and in total is a 10 mile walk for charity and to raise health awareness.

The findings of the Access Audit (see Section 4) by the Fieldfare Trust have revealed that only the more ambulant and fitter members of society have the most complete choice to access and walk the canal towpath. The various 'barriers' that exist preclude sections of society who could potentially use the canal for passive and active recreation.

The canal towpath can already be seen as a strategic footpath across London, offering access to other districts, local walks and local attractions. What is currently absent is any co-ordinated or comprehensive approach to walking along the Regent's Canal and its immediate environs in a way that exploits its strategic potential.

Camden's Unitary Development Plan contains Policy EN67 whereby the Council will strive to develop metropolitan and local walks to improve access to and linkages between open spaces and green chains, and to provide pedestrian routes in pleasant environments.

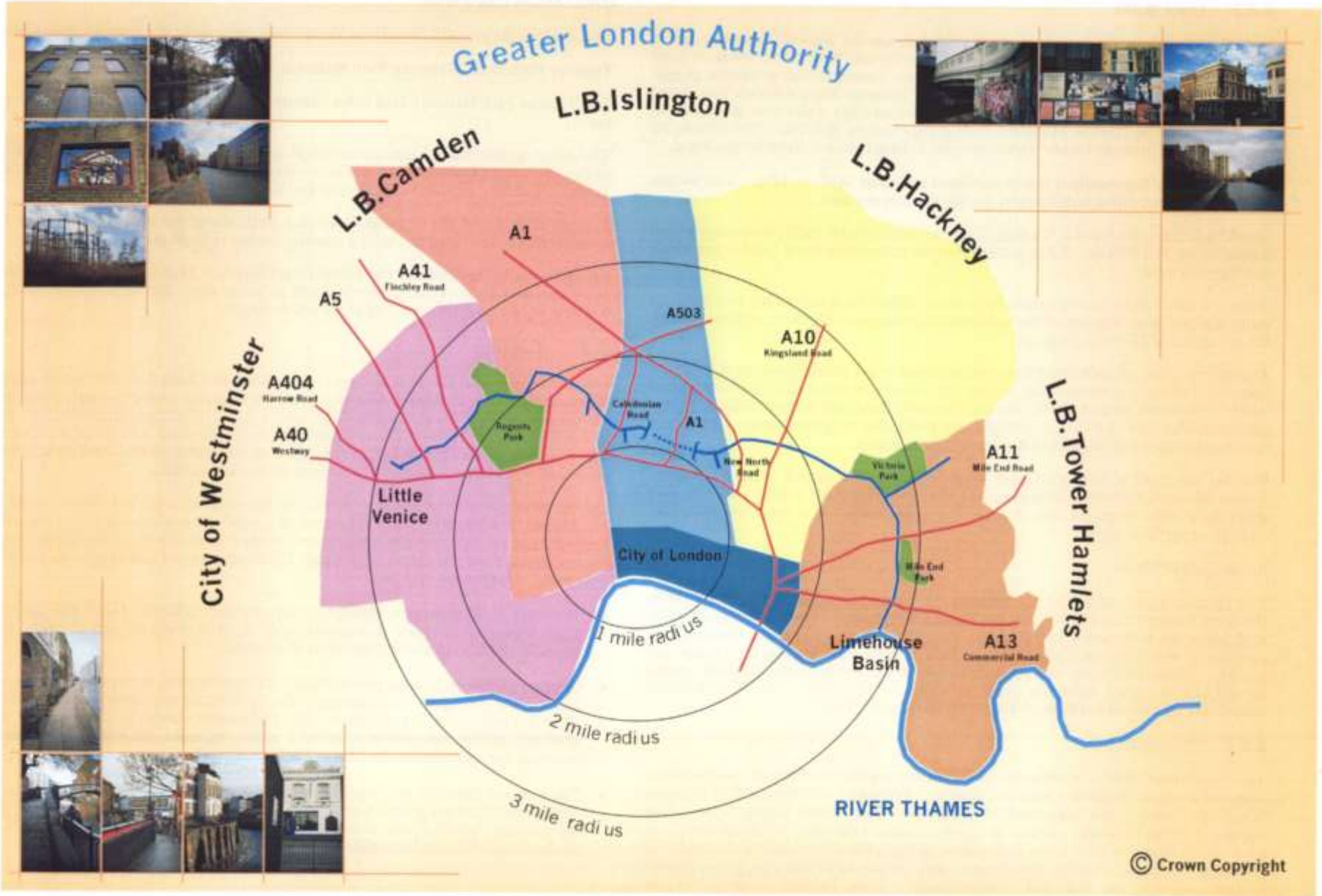
This statement closely reflects the 'Green Chain' policy DEV64 of Tower Hamlet's UDP. It goes further to state specifically that 'links between open space and waterways are to be encouraged'.

The City of Westminster's UDP contains 'Stra 28' which says "the Borough will seek to improve the environmental quality and public access to the Regent's Canal and to complete the Thames Path Natural Trail and the Grand Union Trail".

3.2.1 Pan-London Walking Initiatives

The London Walking Forum is an organisation formed in 1990. It is a partnership between the Ramblers, London Planning Advisory Committee, Countryside Agency, Sports Council, Lee Valley Park and the Environment Agency. In 1993 they launched 'Walk the Web.'

Regent's Canal - context within London Boroughs



REGENT'S CANAL

3.2.2 Local Walks

Several local walks/trails have been developed that use the Regent's Canal or are in close proximity to the canal. These have different themes but tend to focus on local history, architecture and some follow 'Blue Plaques' commemorating famous people that lived in the area. The London Borough of Islington has produced The Angel Trail and the Barnsbury Walk. Two industrial Archaeology walks were published in 1985/86 by Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society (GLIAS). One focuses on the Kings Cross 'Railway Lands' whilst the other is based around Battlebridge Basin.

Central Stepney Regeneration Board published a History Walk in 1998. This adopts the theme of interpreting historic everyday life the Stepney area.

Royal Parks have produced a 'Walking London's Royal Parks' leaflet promoting a trail linking all the Royal Parks. A key section uses the towpath between Paddington Basin and Regent's Park.

Time Out publications have produced a 'London Walks' book containing two excellent walks that use long stretches of the canal but also stray into adjacent neighbourhoods, street markets and London Squares.

This diverse range of walks that focus on the canal or are accessible from it show the range of walking experiences that should be brought together and promoted more widely to generate greater activity on the Regent's Canal and its environs. It is also suggested that new walks are created and publicised to give greater choice and opportunity especially coupled with information on access.

BW has produced a Regent's Canal Walk leaflet in conjunction with the Ragged School Museum between Limehouse and the Ragged School itself. Several other walks have been identified but there is the opportunity for a more co-ordinated, strategic set of canal walks.

Canal Guided Walks

The London Branch of the Inland Waterway Association arrange regular guide walks along the Regent's Canal from Camden Town Underground Station alternating walks to Paddington with walks to Islington. In 1992 these walks were developed in partnership with 'London Walks' Walking Tour Company, increasing their range and number. These tend to be concentrated mainly in the western sections of the canal. Developing an equally attractive range of walks for the eastern length is desirable capitalising on community links and the Stepney History Walk.

3.2.3 Strategic Links

The 'New River Path' is a relatively unknown but significant strategic footpath that connects with the Regent's Canal in Islington. Promoted and managed by Thames Water but initiated and supported by The New River Action Group it is a 17th century artificial waterway created to supply London with fresh drinking water. It heads north from the New River in Islington through the other London Borough's of Hackney, Haringey, Enfield, Broxbourne and allows Londoner's a long distance footpath, crossing the M25 into Hertfordshire. Some sections in the north are accessible by people with disabilities.

Grand Union Canal Walk

This deploys the towpath from Little Venice westwards along the Grand Union Canal.

Thames Path Walk/Thames Path National Trail

The Thames Path National Trail is the only trail to follow a river from its source to the sea.

The route passes many sites of historical or architectural importance; Kelmscott Manor, the city of Oxford, Windsor Castle, Hampton Court Palace, Kew Gardens, the Tower of London, Houses of Parliament and the Millennium Dome.

Ancient bridges and the intricate locks and weirs along the way, together with the riverside flowers and bird life, offer a constant source of fascination.

Easy to get to by bus and trail the Thames Path National Trail is accessible for walkers of all ages and abilities and can be enjoyed in many ways: for an afternoon stroll; a weekend break; or a full scale trek of the whole length.

3.3 Cycling

Officially, the whole stretch of this part of the Regent's Canal does not permit cycling due to the number of bridges with low headroom, narrow towpath, sharp bends and the number of other towpath users. Obviously cyclists still do use this stretch of canal in considerable numbers, many as commuter routes, so there tend to be peak times. The canal is such an obvious commuter route but unfortunately the canal environment creates user conflicts primarily between pedestrians and cyclists.

On the grounds of 'sustainability' the use of the canal as a cycling route should be encouraged, but because of the behaviour of a small proportion of cyclists along the towpath, cyclists can provoke antagonism amongst pedestrians. The following are three extracts from the London Borough UDPs that reveal differences in planning policy and management approach.

- The City of Westminster, through policy numbers TRANS 16/17 and TRANS 22(F) recognise the need to improve safety of cycle journeys and to create new routes in addition to address the needs of cyclists.
- Camden's UDP containing policy TR22 UDP which seeks to expand, develop and improve the borough's' cycle network. The cycle route map shows a section of the Regent's identified as a cycle route. The UDP notes also make the comment that although cyclists are perceived to be a public nuisance only 25% of accidents involving car and bike are the fault of the bike.
- The London Borough of Tower Hamlets UDP policy Dev 64 states that " ... in appropriate locations green chains can be used as cycleways". It goes on to say that the existing 'green chain' should be developed along the Regent's Canal in consultation with other Boroughs.

User issues and opportunities

Improving access

Enhancing the visitor experience

Community safety and reducing the fear of crime

User issues and opportunities

* Some sections of the canal are detached from the surrounding environment despite close proximity to communities
* Large housing estates are located along the canal with limited access to recreational opportunities
* Lack of information concerning access
* Physical barriers onto and along towpath
* Potential for the canal to become a strategic recreational route through London for people with limited mobility
* Commuter route and journeys to school
* Opportunities for access to other recreational pursuits and facilities along the canal corridor

* Potential for user conflict at points along the towpath
* Graffiti and litter
* Lack of adequate locational information
* Lack of interpretation concerning the canals heritage, ecology and local communities
* Unique environmental experience within London
* Rich heritage exists with a range of local associations and links with local community
* The term 'Visitors' embraces a range of users from the London tourist to the dog walker and jogger
* The canal gives access to other recreational facilities e.g Metropolitan Open Space and street markets

* Poor visual surveillance into and along certain sections of canal
* Lack of adequate information to locate oneself
* Increasing use and activity along canal will generate feeling of greater security
* Relatively little crime occurs at present and tends to be localised
* Need to distinguish between crime and anti-social behaviour
* Anti-social behaviour includes graffiti, litter and vandalism
* Blind corners and degraded environments can create a sense of unease
* Low lighting levels beneath some bridges
* There is a lack of escape routes on some sections

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

COMPREHENSIVE IMPROVEMENTS

CO-ORDINATED ACTIONS AND DELIVERY

STRATEGIC AND LOCAL APPROACH

REGENT'S CANAL

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Education is required so that pedestrians have priority on the towpath and with more consideration a peaceful coexistence between the various users of the towpath should be achievable.

Recommendations should include:

- Removing all 'No Cycling' notices, as they are clearly ineffective.
- Formulating and promoting a 'Towpath Code' for cyclists, with an emphasis on consideration for pedestrians.
- New signage and/or design measures encouraging cyclists to dismount or slow down at obvious areas of conflict (bridges, sharp bends and narrow towpaths).
- Observations of towpath use have noted that the Regent's Canal is an extremely popular unofficial cycle route – mostly for commuting and at peak times there are large numbers of users. This confirms the canal's importance as a potentially significant sustainable transport route avoiding the surrounding more polluted, cycle hostile streets.
- User conflict can be addressed through balanced recreational management. Since cyclists are one of the primary users on a daily basis, often coinciding with the modal movements of journeys to school, their presence on the canal will promote a feeling of security and encourage other users if handled correctly.

Cycling organisation – see Section 2 for information concerning Sustrans and the London Cycling Campaign.

A London wide cycle map has been produced by London Cycling Campaign and shows at least 8 points where north south routes cross the Regent's Canal.

The London Cycling Campaign, campaigns for cyclists in London and have worked with Tower Hamlets and SUSTRANS on the SUSTRANS Millennium Route (opening June 2000) starting at the southern end of the Isle of Dogs and heading north through Tower Hamlets. SUSTRANS – in partnership with London Boroughs and other organisations have developed the Millennium Route that uses both the Regent's Canal towpath and Mile End Path through Tower Hamlets. This builds on a strategic cycle route that then follows the Hertford Union Canal eastwards to the Lee Valley Regional Park.

Currently cycle permits are required by users of the towpath which may be obtained from British Waterways. An agreement will need to be reached between Mile End Park, Sustrans and British Waterways to manage and monitor cycling and permits along the Mile End Park section of towpath.

3.4 Angling

Fishing is a potentially important recreational pursuit on the Regent's Canal but the canal is presently underused in this way. It could be a major angling facility in the heart of the capital. Full enjoyment of the fishing opportunities are constrained by some of the following issues:

- A severe lack of parking along all stretches of the canal has precluded the ease of use by fishers. Parking restrictions introduced by the London Boroughs have added to this problem and in the Camley Street area this has resulted in no angling competitions being run there in the last three years;
- There is perceived level of conflict between towpath users especially cyclists that discourages people wanting to fish. Hidden corners are cited as a problem area;
- Problems of anti-social behaviour such as stone throwing and vandalism contributes to the limited use by fishers. The stretch on the Raven Angling Club controlled section between Camley Street and St Pancras Way has been identified as a problem area and British Waterways has received several complaints about this problem. Fouling of the towpath by dogs is also an issue;
- Localised criminal activity such as use of the towpath by drug dealers has been reported and contributes to a sense of unease in places;
- Reports of fish thefts have been recorded;
- The channel suffers from a lack of aquatic vegetation, reed beds and overhanging vegetation on the offside bank;
- Problems of floating refuse have been reported.

3.5 Boating

- **Pleasure Craft**

  Most of the boats on the Regent's Canal are pleasure craft and mostly privately owned. Currently 225 are either licensed or registered. Long-term moorings for these are provided at Blomfield Road near Lisson Grove, at St Pancras Cruising Club, and in Battlebridge, Wenlock and Kingsland Basins.

  Boat owners from the four cruising clubs (on the River Lee Navigation) use the Regent's Canal only as an east-west route to access the Midlands canal network and tend to be put off mooring along the Regent's because of the poor environment and the perceived fear of crime.

- **Hotel Boats**

  London Canals currently have a proposal to develop hotel boats that would cruise London's Canals stopping at key tourist attractions. Currently there are only hotel boats based outside London. This would be a key tourism initiative and tie-in with many other recommendations in the Action Plan.

- **Hire Boats**

  There are no private boat hire firms on the Regent's Canal.

- **Community Boats**

There are four associations or groups that operate or our community boats which are: Camden Canals and Narrowboat Association, Islington Narrowboat Association, Laburnum ... ?

With the exception of Tower Hamlets each of the local authorities own or fund boats mainly for 'youth work'.

'Victoria' is owned by Westminster.

'Taporley' is owned by Camden.

'Angel' is owned by Islington.

'Lady Mild May', 'Mild May II' and 'Opportunity' are funded by Hackney as a community resource. Operating from the Laburnum Boat Club a number of activities and educational programmes are organised. An NVQ accredited programme for disaffected young people is one of these programmes. This is funded via the Haggerston Partnership SRB.

- **Trip Boats**
- Jason's Trip operates between Blomfield Road and Hampstead Road Lock (since 1951) Camden.
- Canal Cruises operate the 'Jenny Wren' and My Fair Lady on Canal Cruises' journeys between Little Venice to just below Hampstead Road Lock.
- Canal Cruises operate from Camden High Street where the boating office is located.
- Waterway Bus Service started in 1959 and is now operated by the London Waterbus Company. This also operates between Little Venice and Camden, stopping at London Zoo.

  They also operate all-day cruises often starting at Camden Lock and heading to Limehouse Basin returning via the Limehouse Cut on the 'East London Ring'.

- On an irregular basis the 'Pride of Lee' trip boat conducts trips from Bromley by Bow on the Lee navigation to the London Canal Museum.

- **Moorings**

Visiting boats are permitted to tie-up anywhere along the Regent's Canal except in the area of London Zoo.

Temporary moorings exist between Regent's Park Road and Gloucester Avenue.

Possible locations for future moorings include the following areas:

- Jubilee Waterside Centre (Camden);
- Camley Street Natural Park;
- East of York Way;
- London Canal Museum;
- Waterside Café – west of Thornhill Bridge on Caledonian Road.

3.6 Tourism Strategy

London's Waterway's Partnership have commissioned a Tourism Strategy which is currently being prepared by British Waterways' London Regional Office.

Encouraging tourists to visit the Regent's Canal and its neighbourhoods is intrinsically linked to the three main themes of this Action Plan.

There needs to be clear and well publicised information about tourist attractions and what the Regent's Canal has to offer. The canal environment and trip boats need to be accessible by people with disabilities;

- Visitors need to feel safe and not experience criminal or anti-social behaviour;
- The canal environment should be one that is a mixture of uplifting, stimulating, tranquil, vibrant experiences. Above all it should offer the visitor choice and alternative or complimentary tourist opportunities along its length, dissolving the polarity between the 'east' and 'west' ends.

A range of project ideas have been proposed that relate to canal use. These are grouped under the three key objectives.

Three main objectives have been defined:

- Developing the tourism product;
- Marketing and raising the profile of the Waterway network;
- Improving and strengthening the Waterway environment.

What do the waterways of London Offer?

London's Waterway network is a unique asset, providing a peaceful counterpoint to the hustle of the city. Within minutes of some of the busiest parts of the capital, visitors to the Waterways can experience the natural environment as well as gain a sense of the industrial heritage that created them. The Waterways can provide places for a range of active pursuits or for a leisurely romantic stroll along the towpath where there is always something of interest to see.

Aims of this strategy

- To increase the number of visitors to London's Waterways
- To increase visitor spend
- To expand the areas of interest by creating new 'honey pot' sites
- To expand the visiting season
- To raise the profile of London's Canals both in the public and political realm
- To demonstrate the links with London's other Waterways, i.e. the Thames and other rivers

- To build stronger links with all sections of the community surrounding the canals
- To promote a co-ordinated approach to the marketing of tourism on London's Waterways
- To promote the expansion of educational facilities and initiatives
- To support and stimulate existing tourism businesses
- To improve transport links to the Waterways.

The above aims are not listed in order of preference and cannot be addressed by a single initiative. This strategy identifies a number of objectives and initiatives that will address one or more of the stated aims. Some of the initiatives are fairly small one off measures whilst others are longer term and will require continued commitment of both revenue and staff time.

Many of these project ideas have been included and developed as part of this Action Plan.

Tourism, Community Development and Public Art

Engaging locals and tourists alike with what the canal has to offer is a fundamental objective of this Action Plan. People need to be actively encouraged to use the canal which will contribute directly to addressing the canal's image problem.

A Public Art programme that is community led, adequately funded and carefully targeted is an important mechanism to achieve this re-engagement with the Regent's Canal. It also acts as a platform for publicity, can act as a catalyst for community development and introduce identity to the area and lead to a sense of local ownership.

The London Waterways Partnership draft Tourism Strategy proposes a Public Art Project as a way of 'improving and strengthening the waterway environment.'

Currently there are five significant Public Art initiatives underway along the Regent's Canal.

The Public Art Development Trust

- PADT is working in the London Borough of Camden focussing on the Kings Cross 'Railway Lands' area. The Public Art Development Trust has been commissioned by the Kings Cross Partnership and London Borough of Camden to produce a strategic plan for public art. A public consultation process is a key part of this.

Key sites that have been identified are:

- Streetscape/Gateway area between Euston and Kings Cross Railway stations;
- Chalton Street, housing programme and courtyards;
- Channel Tunnel Rail link terminal and environs;
- Barnsbury Estate (Islington).

FreeForm Arts

FreeForm Arts are working with the local community and delivery agency SHADA to develop a public art strategy for the Limehouse Fields area in Tower Hamlets. They have also been commissioned by the Peabody Trust to work on the 10 Estates in Islington.

Royal Parks

Royal Parks – have a developing public art programme although funding is limited and is at present restricted to inside Regent's Park. It is an aspiration to extend this to the canal corridor.

Mile End Park

Mile End Park – A Millennium funded park development. Phase II of the park redevelopment includes 'Art Park'. Proposals for art interventions are at a seminal stage but the process has included local community consultation and the appointment of local artists. Queen Mary and Westfield College have a desire to link the campus with the Art Park with a bridge across the canal.

New Deal for Shoreditch

New Deal for Shoreditch – the outline programme includes a £200K Public Arts Programme and a £540K Community Arts Project.

Refer to table of recommendations for details on how to galvanise and capitalise on the five public art initiatives above. It is intended that a comprehensive Public Art Programme for the Regent's Canal should be developed that would have significant benefits in helping tourists and locals alike to re-engage with the canal and to improve its identity and image.

3.6.1 Tourism and Heritage

Heritage features and historical associations encountered along the Regent's Canal are significant but often largely hidden qualities. Their potential as a tourist attraction and educational resource is important. It is mentioned under this section because it is an integral part of the visitor or user experience. Developing a cross-Borough approach to heritage interpretation would assist in attracting tourists and create a co-ordinated linear heritage experience.. Similarly, links through the national curriculum with local schools could use this educational resource to good effect.

The LWP Tourism Strategy also refers to project ideas that include guided walks and training of Blue Badge Guides – simultaneously attracting more visits and creating jobs.

The London Canal Museum is a natural focus around which community links, educational, access and interpretation projects could be developed.

3.6.2 Voluntary Organisations

The following are a list of the main voluntary user groups that have a specific interest in the Regent's Canal:

- Friends of Regent's Canal 'Islington';
- Friends of Regent's Canal 'Camden';
- CHUG (Canal Hackney User Group';
- IWA London Branch

3.7 Community Groups/Community Associations/Schools

Central to delivering appropriate improvements thought the canal is the need to consult and involve the local community and schools. It is intended as a priority in the delivery framework that there will need to be a second stage of consultation. This will be more detailed and use the range of Action Plan objectives to inform and initiate discussion.

It is hoped the London's Waterway Partnership Project Managers will co-ordinate this consultation but because of the extent of the project, appropriate individuals within housing associations and other delivery agencies could assist in this process.

A key objective of the Action Plan will be to further develop Friends of the Regent's Canal for each Borough involving local interest and user groups alongside representatives from the community.

To ensure the aspects of community safety extend beyond the life of individual projects it is also an aspiration to extend the Waterway Wardens concept to areas along the Regent's, particularly where significant neighbourhood renewal initiatives border the canal such as in Shoreditch.

The following list of the main 'communities', relating to the canal are shown on the planning drawings for each borough.

Westminster

Schools

- Gateway Primary School.

Housing Areas

- Lisson Grove Estate;
- Lisson Grove Moorers;
- Cheadle Court;
- Maida Vale & Regent's Park Society (15 other local amenity groups exist).

Camden

Schools

- Primrose Hill Primary School;
- Hawley Infant & Primary School;

Housing Areas

- Elm Village Estate.

Islington

Schools

- Copenhagen Primary School;
- Blessed Sacrament Primary School;
- Hanover Primary School.

Housing Areas

- Copenhagen Estate;
- Naish Court – Guinness Trust;
- Barnsbury Estate – New? Housing;
- 10 Estates – Peabody Trust;
- Packington Estate.

Hackney

Schools

- Whitmore Primary School;
- Laburnum Primary School;

Housing Areas

- Haggerston Estate;
- Wilton Villas;
- De Beauvoir Town;
- Wenlock Barn Estate (south of Eagle Wharf Road);

- West Kingsland Estates (Kenning House – west of Whitmore Road);
- Stonebridge Estate;
- Regent's Court;
- Suffolk Estate;
- Laburnum Estate;
- Whiston Estate;
- Whitmore Estate.

(Note: the housing estates in Shoreditch are all in the DETR's 1,000 most deprived estates in the UK.)

Tower Hamlets

Schools

- Sir William Burrough Primary School
- Wellington Estate School?;
- Gatehouse School;
- Ben Johnson Primary School;
- Stephen Hawking School
- Halley Primary School;

Housing Areas

- Wellington Estate;
- Globe Town;
- Ocean Estate.
- Loxley Estate

4 USER ISSUES

British Waterways

4 User Issues

The diagram opposite summarises the three groups of user issues identified from preliminary consultation with the community that are the basis of this Action Plan. They are:

- Improving Access for people with disabilities.
- Enhancing the visitor experience.
- Community safety and reducing the fear of crime.

The issues identified can be seen as opportunities as well as constraints to the safe enjoyment of the canal environment.

Analysis of the main user issues has produced a range of actions and recommendations that can help remedy negative aspects and maximise opportunities along the canal. Actions need to be realistic and deliverable. This should also assist in longer-term management of particular issues.

In order to arrive at recommendations a wider understanding of the findings from the analysis and consultation is needed. This section explores each of the three groups of issues. The FieldFare Trust carried out the survey and access audit along the canal. The Metropolitan Police Crime Prevention Officers from each Borough carried out a 'crime prevention survey' for the Regent's Canal. Lastly, the issues identified under the heading visitor experience have been compiled via this study and from British Waterways staff surveys.

The three sets of issues are interlinked so that an improvement of one set of issues can bring about benefits in other areas. For example improving access to enable more people to use the towpath may indirectly improve the feeling of security through simply having more people around.

4.1 Improving Access to the Regent's Canal

The diagram titled Strategic Access Plan is based on the results of the FieldFare Trust's access audit.

An initial access audit has been undertaken on the Regent's Canal following the methodology of the Countryside For All (CFA) Guide. It is considered that despite the canal's course being through London, that the CFA Standard applicable to it is that of 'Urban Fringe and Managed Landscape'. The towpath audit covered approximately 12,000 metres measured in line with the twelve access criteria employed within the Standards.

General Findings

If the CFA Standard for the canal's setting is, as recommended, to be the goal of access improvements, then considerable engineering, operational and programme access projects will be required to meet this target. Though the perception of many may be that a towpath is likely to be among the most accessible of environments, it was found that along the Regent's only a small proportion of the route falls within 'Standard'.

Some key issues are set out below:

- None of the current access points to the canal were found to meet the appropriate standard.
- Those access points currently closest to the standard and those with development potential through existing partnership projects often coincide with Borough Boundaries and could therefore be considered priority/strategic nodes in both visitor access and partnership terms.
- The above points also commonly align with either areas of the corridor with the greatest residential population density or focal points for retail commerce.
- Current path construction is often outside the standard through a combination of surface quality (either by specification or maintenance), crossfall/camber and width.
- Short but often very steep gradients punctuate the route, particularly at access points to the highway and in the vicinity of locks.
- Traditional brick built bridges commonly restrict the clear walking tunnel required by those with visual impairment.
- There is a chronic lack of opportunities for resting or seating along the canal, a particular requirement of people with stamina limitations (the elderly, those with heart conditions etc).

Currently there are extremely limited opportunities for people with disabilities to gain access to enjoy the canal. Ramps are too steep, steps are steep, poorly constructed and maintained, level changes alongside locks have steep gradients, signage and interpretation are non-existent, there are no warning indications of low bridges, the towpath is often too narrow and poorly surfaced and motorbike barriers, in spite of a RADAR key system, prevent easy progress.

To offer the greatest choice and opportunity to people with disabilities who visit the Regent's Canal, the approach to access improvements needs to be both strategic and comprehensive. There is little point in improving a single access point or improving a particular stretch of towpath. Access throughout all the London Boroughs should be improved, particularly those with the greatest depravation.

Programme Access

It is also vital that alongside physical access improvements there is an objective of improving Programme Access. This means ensuring there is accessible information on access that is widely promoted and appropriate targeted. This need not be on the canal – in fact there is little point at such locations – information should be available in the surrounding communities.

Strategic Access Plan

Constraints and opportunities

Westminster
*No towpath access along Blomfield Road
*No signage along Aberdeen Place
*Steep steps and intimidating entrance from Aberdeen place
* Towpath inaccessible past Lisson wide moorings
* Towpath has significant cross-fall through Regent's Park section
* Limited number of access points

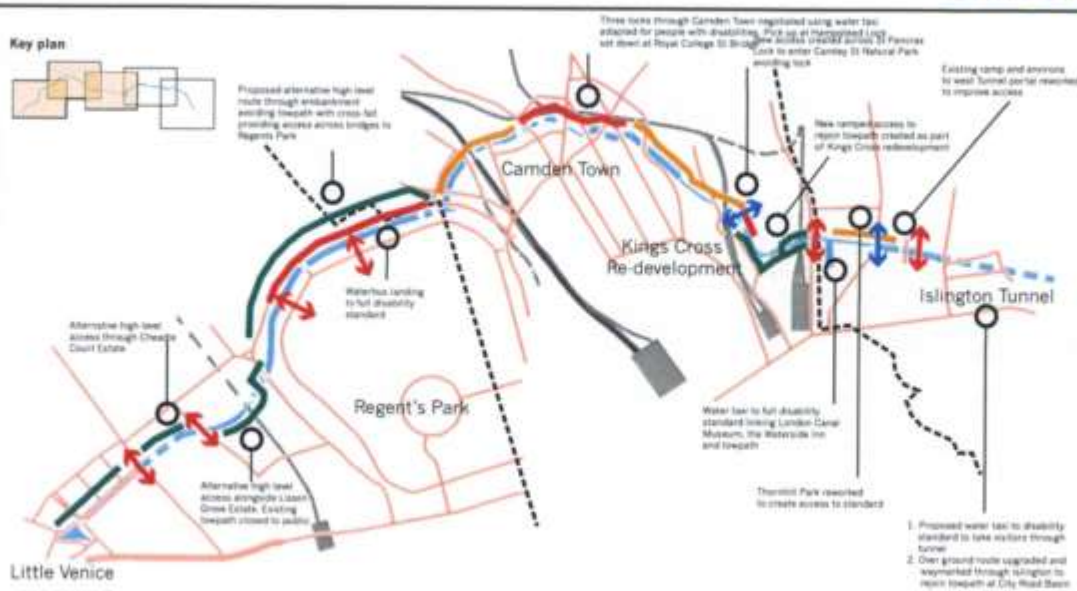
Camden
* Towpath surface needs re-laying
* No resting points
* Problematic access in prime sites eg Camden Market
* Lock sides a major barrier
* Seating sporadic and in poor locations

Islington
* Tunnel is a barrier but the route through Islington could be made accessible
* Very steep ramps to the east
* Close proximity to major transport interchanges and Kings Cross re-development

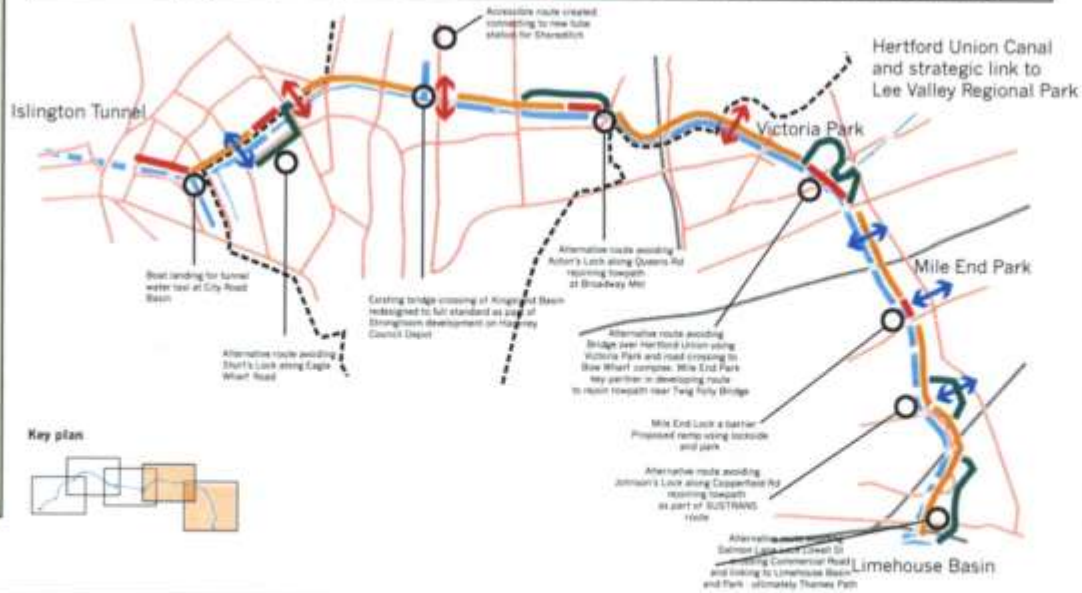
Islington
* Stuff's Lock & City Road Lock are barriers to access
* York Way (Maiden Bridge) is a key access point

Hackney
* Towpath surface requires repairs to be brought upto standard
* Kingsland Basin Bridge is a barrier to access on one side
* Ramp to Broadway market needs minor improvements to bring up to standard
* Acton's Lock is barrier to access
* Lack of appropriate seating

Tower Hamlets
* Hertford Union bridge is a barrier due to steep gradients
* Victoria Park has opportunities for alternative routes avoiding Hertford Union crossing
* Mile End Park offers new access opportunities
* Locks along this length act as a barrier
* Towpath surface is not to standard - uneven and significant crossfall in places
* Motorbike barriers impede access



Key
Access into surroundings upgraded as required
Proposed access
Key Access point improvement
Alternative route to towpath brought up to standard
Existing towpath accessible if brought up to standard
Towpath not to standard and expensive to remedy



Recommendations

Westminster
* Alternative routes developed as an alternative to
inaccessible towpath along Aberdeen Place, Cheadle Court, Grove House embankment and
Lisson Grove
* Improvements to existing access points
* New access points created
* Water Bus landing adapted for people with disabilities
* Improved signage
* Seating and rest points to be provided

Camden
* Towpath surface improvements
* Alternative access routes into Camden Market
* Water taxi proposal to negotiate lock flight
* Improved seating, signage and passing places
* Alternative route via or around Camley Street Natural Park

Islington
* Over tunnel route to be identified and improved for access
* Water taxi alternative created through tunnel
* Alternative route avoiding Stuff's Lock created linking with Gainsborough Film Studios

Hackney
* Towpath width increased from Kingsland Road eastwards
* Kingsland Basin bridge re-designed as part of Stongroom development
* Link established to new underground stations for Shoreditch
* Alternative route provided along Queens Road

Tower Hamlets
* Alternative route through Victoria Park created via Bow wharf returning to Mile End Park
* Alternative routes within Mile End Park to by-pass locksides
* User conflicts resolved on SUSTRANS section
* Alternative route negotiated along Lowell St. and Loxley estate
* Link established to Thames Path and riverside

REGENT'S CANAL

British Waterways

REGENT'S CANAL

Partnership

Lastly, the strategic access plan proposed it by no means fulfilling the needs of people with disabilities until local access and community groups have been closely involved in its further development.

Topography

A feature of the Regent's Canal is that it drops 23 metres from Paddington in the west to Limehouse Basin in the east. For boats this level change is accommodated by the locks of which there are twelve. To someone with limited mobility these are a considerable barrier. It is hoped that through imaginative recreational management and appropriate re-design these barriers can be overcome.

s It is felt that as part of any Programme Access strategy it will be suggested that an easier way to travel the length of the Regent's Canal will be to travel west to east, ie with the natural fall of the canal towards Limehouse Basin. This will be the most easily travelled route for someone who is less ambulant. In spite of this there are still at least four 'humpback' bridges, three across basins and one across the Hertford Union Canal where gradients present a barrier.

Alternative Routes

In order to create a continuously accessible route, the strategic access plan proposes what are termed 'alternative routes' that are close to or within sight of the canal and usually follow pavements along roads. These have been chosen to still maximise the canal experience and create additional experiences, sometimes linking to other recreational attractions. They are shown in green on the Strategic Access Plan.

Summary of main issues or key sites

The two adjacent pages highlight some of the main access issues identified by the FieldFare Trust Key sites for improvements have also been shown where access to other tourist, recreational or transport facilities is possible or joint funding between Boroughs or involving other agencies will bring considerably greater benefits.

4.2 Enhancing the Visitor Experience

This takes many forms. What is clear though is the Regent's Canal suffers from an image problem. Whilst image is to a degree subjective, it is possible to be objective about what helps to create the canal's negative image in the visitor's eye.

The other two user issues discussed in this section are intrinsically related to the question of image. If the less able bodied are prevented by problems of access then this disenfranchises a large number of potential visitors. Fewer visitors and users can lead to a feeling of unease along the canal – it is seen as a no-go area.

The main focus of this user issue though, is the very obvious visual detractions, legacies of anti-social behaviour such as graffiti and neglected or ageing visitor facilities in all forms.

The fact that the canal passes through five boroughs, each having differing maintenance agreements, previous improvements of differing age and communities with vastly different degrees of social inclusion, means it is hardly surprising the Regent's Canal does not always encourage the visitor to stay.

Survey

The main features that contribute to the visitor's experience can be summarised as follows:

- Signage and interpretation – bridge signs, way markers, navigational signs.
- Waterway maintenance – cutting vegetation and management regimes, lock painting and repairs and rubbish.
- Boundary and small site improvements.
- Graffiti
- Towpath condition.
- Moorings and mooring facilities.

The recommendations to tackle these issues appear in the tables at the rear of this document. The success of these will depend on commitment at borough level by British Waterways, the local authority and partners, but also pan-borough so that strategic actions such as co-ordinated signage, adequate mooring facilities and comprehensive towpath surface improvements are achieved. Naturally there also needs to be long-term commitment so the appropriate management and maintenance mechanisms need to be in place. A sense of ownership will also support this and it is recommended that Friends of Regent's Canal or Adopt-a-canal schemes are initiated for each of the five boroughs or with key communities.

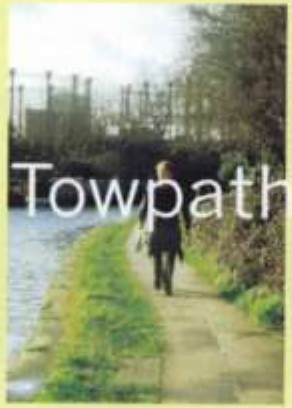
4.3 Reducing the Fear of Crime

To be safe and secure is a fundamental expectation. People have a right to reasonable safety, irrespective of age, sex or circumstances, our upbringing and our place in community.

One way to approach the problem of crime and anti-social behaviour is through effective partnership working. This should involve the wider community. In this study reducing the fear of crime on the Regent's Canal can only be achieved by including the communities living near and using the canal. The recommendations and initiatives to alleviate the fear of crime will also contribute to regeneration, community development, equality and opportunity.

Barriers to access take different forms:
1 Poor signage and lack of information
2 Physical barriers - even with RADAR key system
3 Locksides and associated canal structures

It is important to involve the community and local access groups in developing a strategy for access to the canal



Left: The existing towpath can be too narrow for users to pass
Middle: Towpath surface can be uneven and have crossfall towards the canal
Right: Narrowing and hidden corners can create user conflict

Steep and stepped ramps, often with uneven or slippery surfacing with no landings

Small changes in level can preclude access and constitute trip hazards even for the fully ambulant

Existing landings on corners can be difficult to negotiate

REGENT'S CANAL

Access issues

REGENT'S CANAL

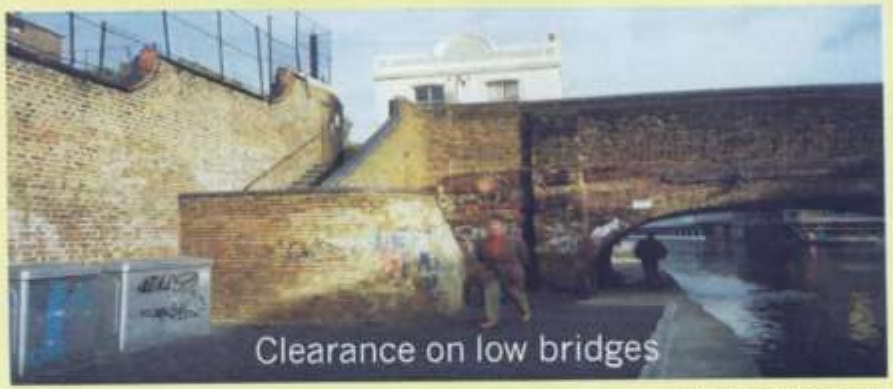
Heritage structures such as this arched section of towpath at Camden cannot always be physically altered to improve access but providing information or even appropriately detailed handrails can

The surrounding environment can pose a problem to accessing the canal let alone the actual point of access itself

There are existing opportunities for access by people with disabilities to the water but these are limited

Access to information and promoting the canal as a recreational resource widely is fundamental to the success of any Strategic Access Plan

Many of the existing access points to the canal fall below standard - even those improved in recent years



Low bridges pose a problem for the visually impaired Improving access is not just for wheelchair users

Creating new access points at strategic locations will benefit a greater number of users and help improve community safety

British Waterways

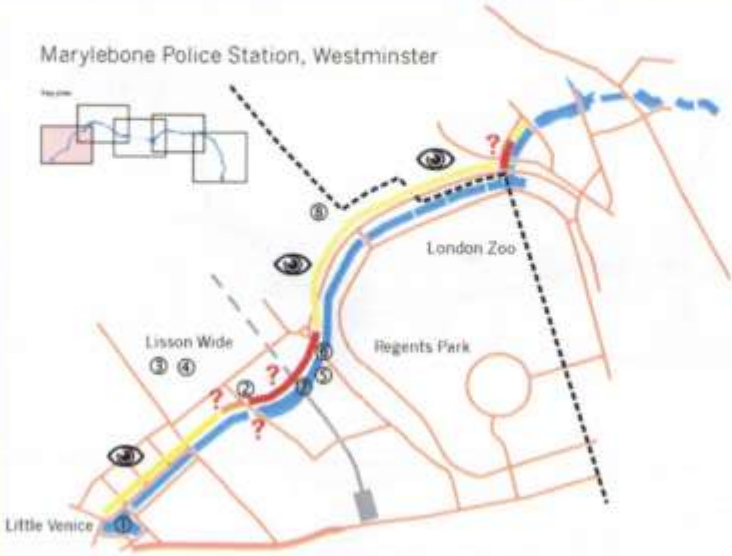
Community Safety and Reducing the fear of crime

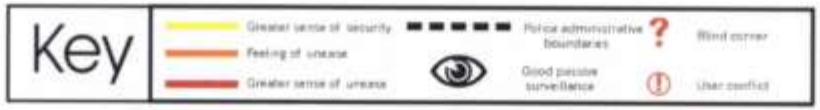
REGENTS CANAL ACTION PLAN

Findings of Metropolitan Police surveys

City of Westminster

- Moorings approaching Maida Hill Tunnel benefit from good surveillance
- Aberdeen Place to Lisson Wide is intimidating and unhospitable canal effectively in a 'canyon'. Blank retaining walls and gate at end which can be locked at times
- Conflict between Lisson Green Estate residents and Moorings at Lisson Wide
- 'Dead Zone' under Metropolitan Line Bridge
- Regents Park and London Zoo section of towpath has more pleasant and open aspect
- Bridges particularly suffer from graffiti
- Towpath route presently has to cross electricity cables at Lisson Wide Moorings
- Underneath to Hampstead bridge is a rear gennerator and objects have been dropped on boaters from the bridge





Recommendations

City of Westminster

1 Consider improved lighting at Little Venice

2 Explore alternative high level towpath route through Clarendle Court to avoid 'canyon' between Aberdeen Place and Lisson Wide

3 Introduce better signage and 'distance to' information

4 Increase patrols by Enforcement officers and Local Police

5 Community project to create alternative high level towpath alternative through Lisson Green Estate

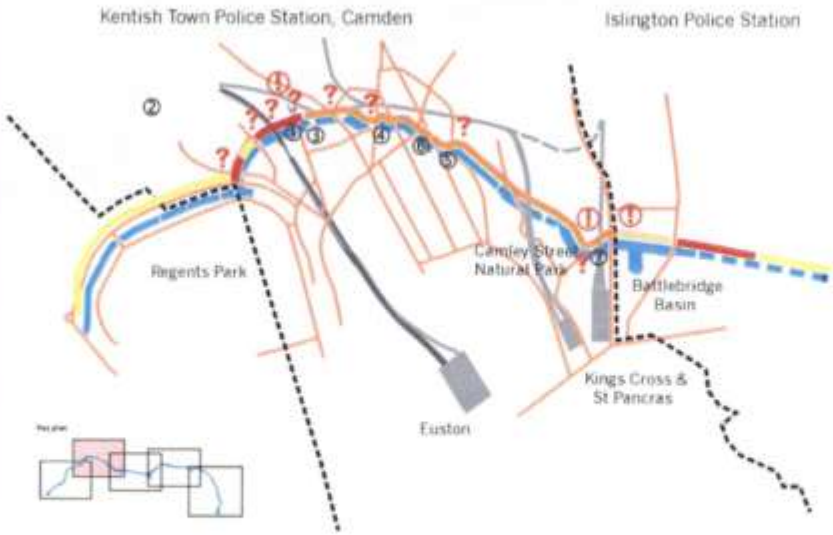
6 Narrow railing design to stepped bridge to prevent objects being dropped boats

7 Close off Lisson Wide moorings to public and introduce improved facilities and security

8 Open up alternative towpath routes through landscaped areas on northern embankment through Regents Park section

London Borough of Camden

- Blind spots on bridges generate a feeling of unease
- Existing benches are in poor condition and poorly located usually at blind spots
- Poor surveillance from the Oval Road at Prairie Castle
- Vandalised information signs
- Conflict on hampstead bridge over former tram near Hampstead Lock
- Recessed doorways and spaces alongside towpath create a feeling of unease
- Jamestown Road recycling area attracts druggers and drug addicts
- Poor lighting for such a well used area across all hours
- Kentish Town Road Bridge is a hang out for drug druggers and addicts
- Encourage activities such as Barnes Angling Club and St Pancras Cruising Club
- Centralisation PTI contributes to canal activity - but limited at towpath level
- Royal College Street Bridge, poor visibility onto towpath due to vegetation
- Lack of restaurant poptons particularly along Ellis Village section



London Borough of Camden

1 Create views onto waterway from Prairie Castle

2 Introduce signage and codes of conduct to resolve user conflict

3 Design out blind spots on bridges

4 Relocate and re-install benches and remove graffiti

5 Seal off recessed doorways

6 Environmental and management improvements to recycling centre

7 Re-design area around Kentish Town Road Bridge

8 Redesign canal frontage to Centralisation PTI and open up access

9 Clear vegetation to open up views around Royal College Street Bridge

10 Improve area around York Way bridge

REGENT'S CANAL

British Waterways

Community Safety and Reducing the fear of crime

REGENT'S CANAL

Findings of Metropolitan Police surveys

London Borough of Islington

- Thornhill Road Park is intimidating and has poor surveillance
- High level footpath west of Islington Tunnel entrance used by youths to stone boaters. Evidence of drug taking and prostitution and has poor visual surveillance from adjacent homes
- Problems of locked sections of towpath that can lock people in particularly between Duncan Terrace and Danbury St
- Poorly located benches and graffiti especially at City Road Basin
- Intimidating entrance alongside Packington Estate Community Centre
- New North Road Bridge allows access for youths on offside undercroft

London Borough of Hackney

- Brick built steps to Southgate Road Bridge preclude adequate visual surveillance over canal
- Graffiti and poorly located benches
- De Beauvoir Road bridge - parapet restricts views
- User conflict on bridge across Kingsland basin
- Towpath narrows under Haggerston Rd. Bridge
- Steps from Regents Court enclosed by brick wall
- Gate at top of steps to Andrew Road locked - alternative access barred
- Poor lighting under Mare Street Railway bridge
- Parapet wall to Mare Street bridge precludes surveillance of canal

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

- Poor lighting to Railway bridge
- Poor lighting to Mile End Bridge
- Poor lighting to Ben Johnson's Road bridge
- Poor lighting to Salmon Lane road bridge
- Intimidating access from Commercial Road
- Generally open impression to this length and greater opportunities for escape
- Graffiti in places
- Street furniture in poor state of repair or non existent

Recommendations

London Borough of Islington

1 Redesign Thornhill Park to improve visual surveillance

2 Re-design approaches to Islington Tunnel from the west

* Review management of locked sections of towpath
* Develop strategy for repositioning and renewing benches
* Remove graffiti and set-up ongoing monitoring of graffiti

3 Re design entrance alongside Packington City Centre

4 Redesign canalside area at City Road basin

London Borough of Hackney

1 Open up views from Southgate Road Bridge

2 Remove graffiti - relocate and renew benches

3 Introduce railings to create views onto the towpath at De Beauvoir road bridge

4 Redesign bridge over Kingsland Basin as part of Stronghroom Development

5 Open up steps to Regent Court

6 Close off steps to Andrew Road

7 Introduce lighting beneath Mare St Railway bridge

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

8 Introduce lighting to Railway bridge

9 Introduce lighting to Mile End Road bridge

10 Introduce lighting to Ben Johnson bridge

11 Introduce lighting to Salmon Lane road bridge

12 Redesign entrance from Commercial Road

* Implement signing and location strategy

British Waterways

London Waterways Partnership requested the assistance if the Metropolitan Police who carried out Crime Prevention Surveys. The Crime Prevention officers from the Police Station covering each of the five London Boroughs along the Regent's Canal contributed.

The 'Community Safety and Reducing the Fear of Crime' analysis drawing shows those Police Stations that cover lengths of the canal Borough by Borough. The findings and recommendations run west to east, that is, Westminster to Tower Hamlets. The issues are tabled on the left with recommendations on the right.

The Police reports are included in Appendix 2 of this report. Video surveys were also produced by Marylebone Police Station, Westminster and Islington Police Station, Islington.

Many of the recommendations arising from the surveys that seek to address the fear of crime also indirectly improve access, resolve user conflict, enhance the environment and improve the visitor experience.

Many of the actions that will reduce the fear of crime in the table of actions at the back of this document, are delivered by similar recommendations taken up by the other themes of access and experience.

The following is a list of the key findings:

- Across all five Boroughs the number of actual crimes reported on the canal are low compared to surroundings.
- The low number of crimes do not reflect the problems of anti-social behaviour such as graffiti, stone throwing, drinkers and drug dealers, or criminal damage or some canal user's perception of the fear of crime.
- A degree of canal crime is not reported.
- British Waterways have a duty of care to boat dwellers and canal users.
- There is difficulty in describing where along the towing path a crime has taken place because of the similarity of the environment.
- A general lack of clear signage on bridges, access points (distance to next and walking time) exists.
- Passive surveillance along the canal by other users and buildings overlooking the canal is a key contributor to security and a sense of well being.
- A review of the management of the towpath in respect of locked gates to access points or at intervals along the towpath is needed.
- 'Blind corners' to bridges, particularly where benches are located. Benches can be considered a 'fear generator' if poorly located.
- 'Dead zones' under railway bridges.
- Views onto the waterway – these are few and far between. Road bridge parapets are high or preclude views along the canal. Individual access points, as well, do not allow advance views into the canal corridor.

The following is an explanation of the 'Community Safety and Reducing the Fear of Crime' diagram and the keyed issues:

Feeling of security for users/visitors

From the summary of the Police surveys, and surveys by British Waterways staff the canal length has been divided up into sections that feel more or less secure. A range of factors contribute to this (degree of openness/enclosure created by buildings and open spaces next to the canal; concealed corners due to:

- bridges;
- serial vision;
- access points;
- opportunity for passive surveillance from surrounding buildings;
- intensity of use and presence of canal users;
- overall impression of environmental quality).

Although to a degree subjective three grades have been identified.

- Lengths in red depict the most intimidating sections or points on the towpath where there is the greatest sense of unease.
- Orange represents lengths where in spite of positive attributes (such as housing overlooking the canal) the towpath environment creates a feeling of unease because of overwhelming negative factors such as lack of opportunity for escape.
- The Yellow band indicates those sections where it is felt most visitors would feel comfortable in daytime hours and there is the greatest sense of security. These tend to coincide with the areas of public open space where the canal is not in a 'canyon' of buildings, and the police crime prevention reports indicate little or no criminal or anti-social activity.

Hidden corners and the sense of unease are indicated by a question mark. Exclamation marks indicate points of user conflict for instance between cyclists and pedestrians and also 'barriers' to people with disabilities, eg low soffit level of bridge. These locations require comprehensive treatments to successfully resolve the related issues described.

In the tabled Action Plan the each location receives a location number. They are cross referenced to and represented on the Borough proposals maps.

5 PLANNING

5 Planning

REGENT'S CANAL

This section summarises the main policies contained in the Unitary Development Plans covering the five London Boroughs through which the Regent's Canal passes. All five UDPs acknowledge the significance of the canal as a resource for local people and visitors alike that requires protection from certain types of development and wherever possible, enhancement via the planning process.

The diagrams over the next 5 pages summarise the main policies and designations.

Statutory protection, designations and Special Policy Areas

The degree of statutory protection relating to the canal differs between the five London Boroughs. Some sections of the Regent's within a Borough receive Conservation Area status protection. Islington is the canal designated as being a Conservation Area.

Elsewhere the canal is afforded the designation 'Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation' a Green Chain, Area of Special Character, Green Link and Recreational Walkway. Other conservation areas border the canal and have a significant bearing on the canal's visual setting and historic context partially in the City of Westminster.

Planning for All

To ensure the effective delivery of this Action Plan's proposals for the canal this review also includes reference to those policies contained in the Unitary Development Plan's that support the three groups of user issues identified on in Section 4 which are:

- Enhancing the visitor experience (policies aimed at improving tourism and the environment;
- Improving access for people with disabilities;
- Reducing the fear of crime (safer environments for local inhabitants).

This is needed to reinforce the full consideration of these issues along the entire length of the canal. Such policies apply equally to the canal environment. Often the relationship of new development adjacent to the canal with the canal itself is overlooked and the opportunity to improve access or create a safer environment is lost This wider approach to access, crime and the visitor experience is the key to re-engaging canal-side communities with the canal. Equally, issues relating to access, and crime do not begin and end at the canal but have a direct relationship with the surrounding environment. Planning for all members of society should be of paramount importance in the delivery of this Action Plan.

Social Context

It is also important to not lose sight of the range of canal users. A summary of users and user issues is contained in Section 4. The use of the canal by those communities who live around it is vital to its future. The presence of people helps to engender a sense of well being for others. To encourage the widest engagement with the canal proposals need to specifically target particular members of society. The UDPs contain social and demographic statistics that both inform and support the Action Plan's recommendations. In this way informed choice and opportunity is created for the more disadvantaged and minority groups of society.

Planning Guidance from DETR

The following is a brief outline of initiatives and pilot schemes from Central Government that have a bearing on the formulation and funding opportunities for the actions and recommendations contained in this document:

- 'Home zones' have been developed in a number of European countries, where they typically incorporate low traffic speeds, pedestrianised areas and design features to emphasise a change in priority to cyclists and pedestrians. These may have a role to play in reducing road accidents to children. With good design, many of the objectives of continental home zones could be achieved within existing UK legislation. A number of schemes are being introduced within the UK, under an initiative co-ordinated by the Children's Play Council and Transport 2000. The DETR are monitoring nine pilot schemes to provide early feedback on the effectiveness of different approaches. Authorities developing home zones should refer to their proposals in their Local Transport Plans. This study has several opportunities to create 'Home Zones' adjacent or linked to the canal, most notably on the 10 Estates, Islington and the large housing estates in Hackney.

- Safer routes to school

  There are opportunities for identifying and establishing safer routes to school that may use parts of the Regent's Canal towpath. The need for safety is paramount and any proposals should follow best practice and involve local authorities, schools, parents and teachers to develop a comprehensive approach.

  Measures that could be considered include escort schemes, improvements to local transport services and improving school facilities for cycling.

  The London Borough of Hackney have already initiated a Safer Routes to School project. Although the Regent's Canal did not feature in their consultation it may be that this is because it was not currently viewed as a realistic off-road alternative.

  It is suggested that, with the right approach, routes using the canal could be identified particularly in the New Deal for Shoreditch area.

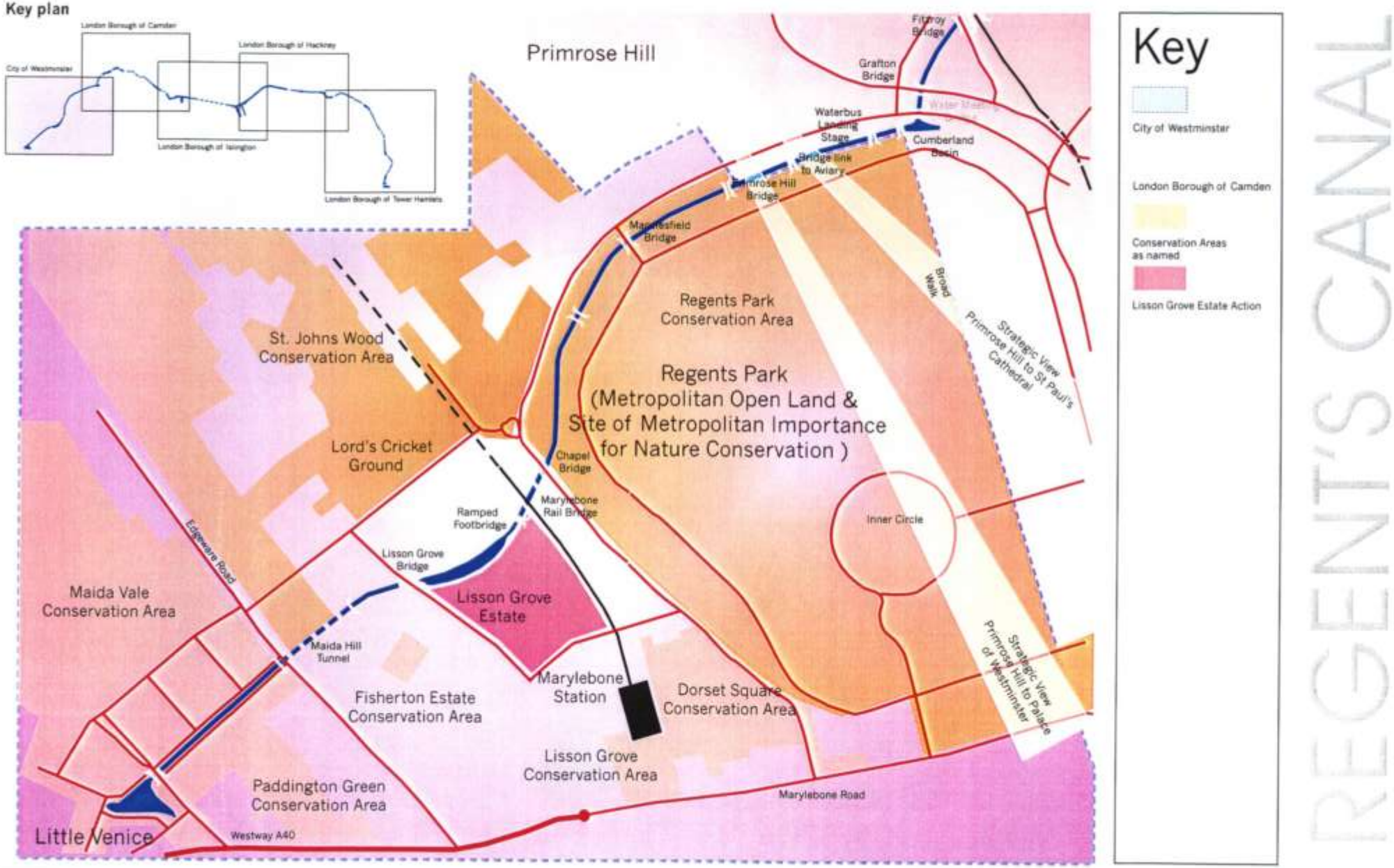
- Journeys to work – sustainable travel/Local Transport Plans (LTPs).

  In line with *Encouraging walking: advice to local authorities*, LTPs should encourage walking, both for short journeys and for access to public transport. Walking is a low-cost, healthy and socially inclusive way of travelling. Investment in it can benefit everybody. Authorities should use the principles and messages contained within the national guidance for encouraging walking to inform both their strategic planning and day-to-day provision.

  Authorities should set targets relevant to the aim of encouraging more people to walk, linked to the local Health Improvement Programme. The main elements of a Local Walking Strategy (LWS) should be included in the LTP.

City of Westminster

Planning context

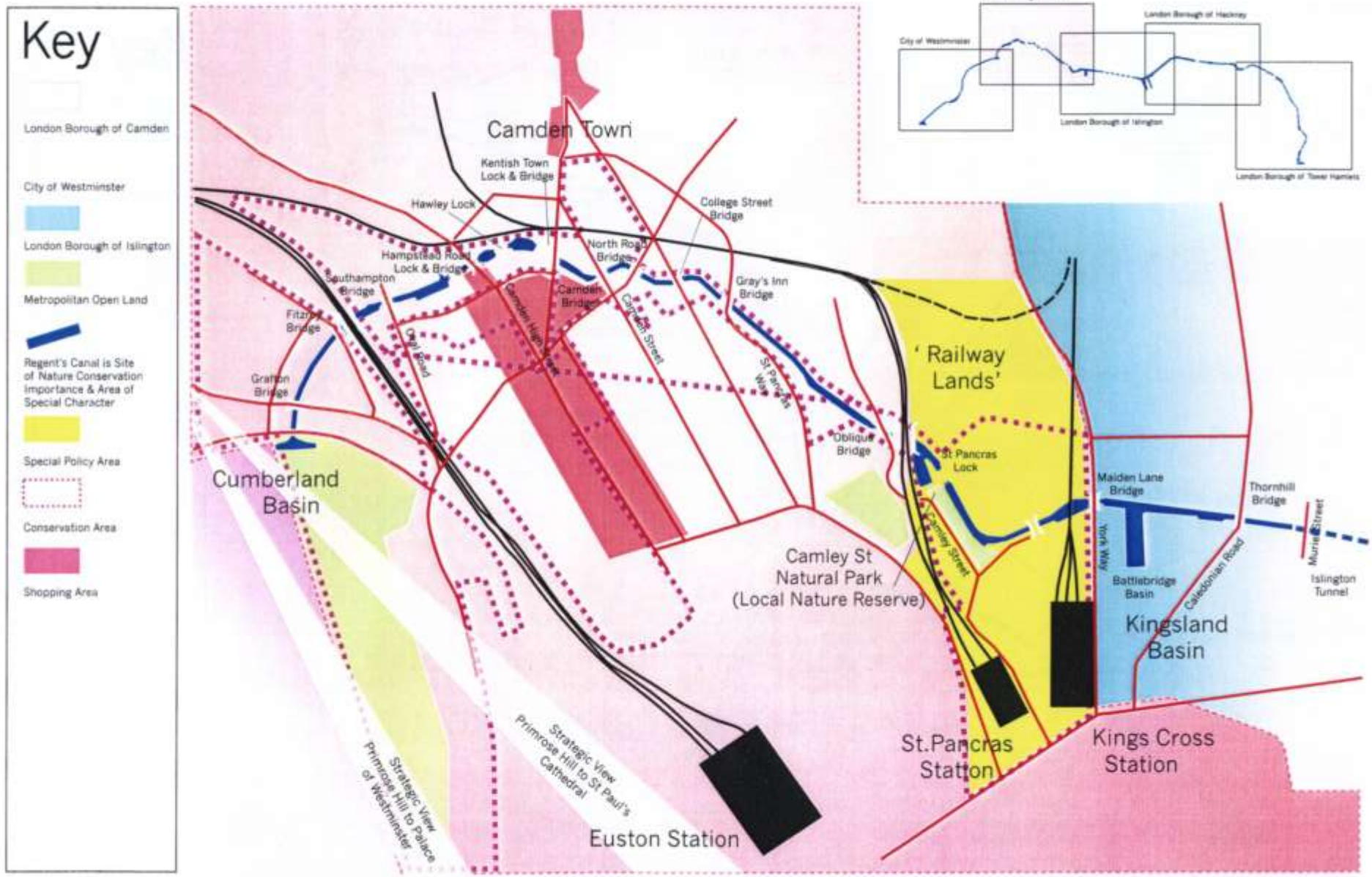


REGENT'S CANAL

British Waterways

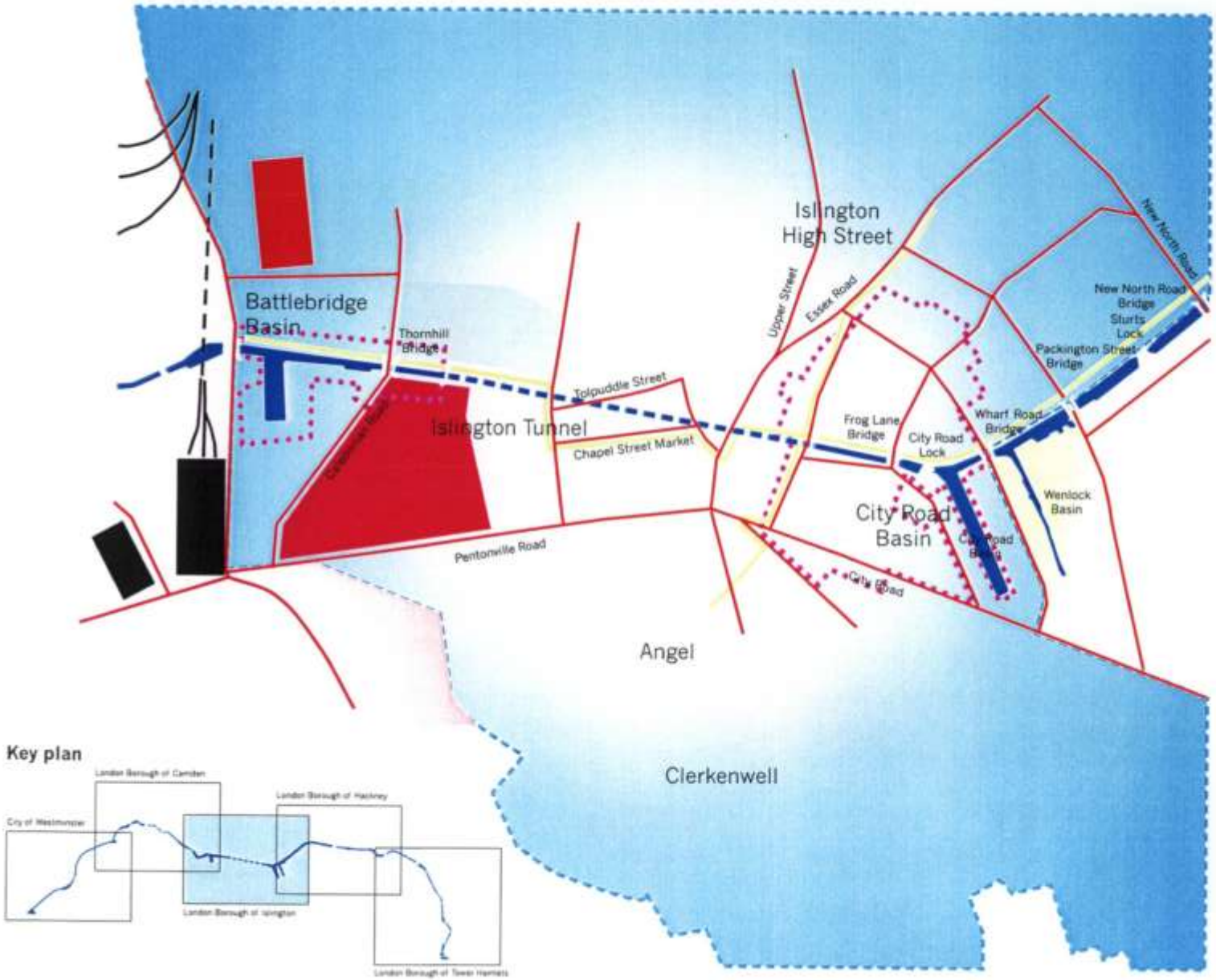
London Borough of Camden

REGENT'S CANAL



London Borough of Islington

Planning context



Key

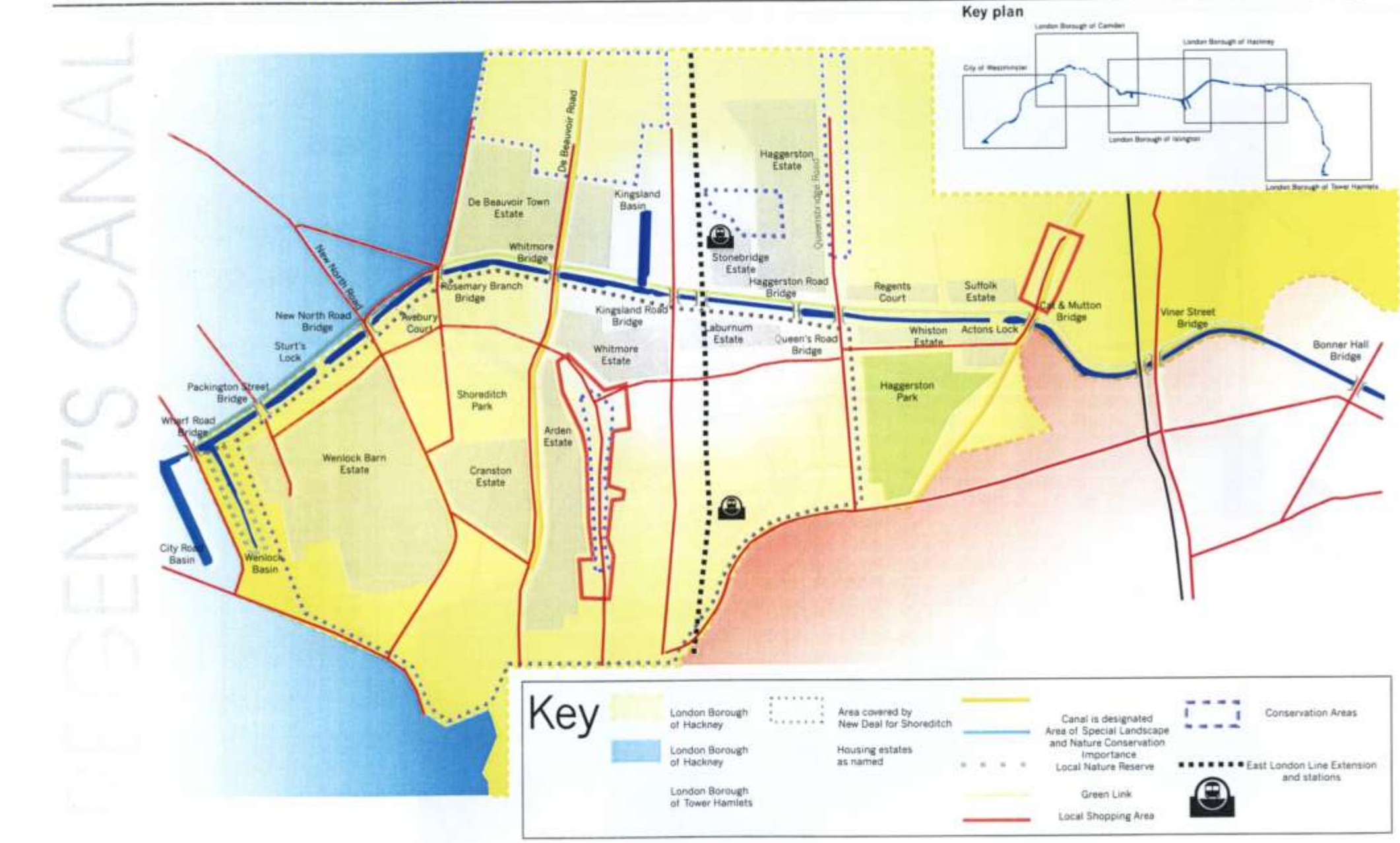
- London Borough of Islington
- London Borough of Camden
- London Borough of Hackney
- Conservation Areas
- Canal is designated Site of Nature Conservation Importance
- Recreational Walkway
- 10 Estates Housing Improvements Peabody Trust
- Newlon Housing Barnsbury Estate
- Nairsh Court Guinness Trust

REGENT'S CANAL

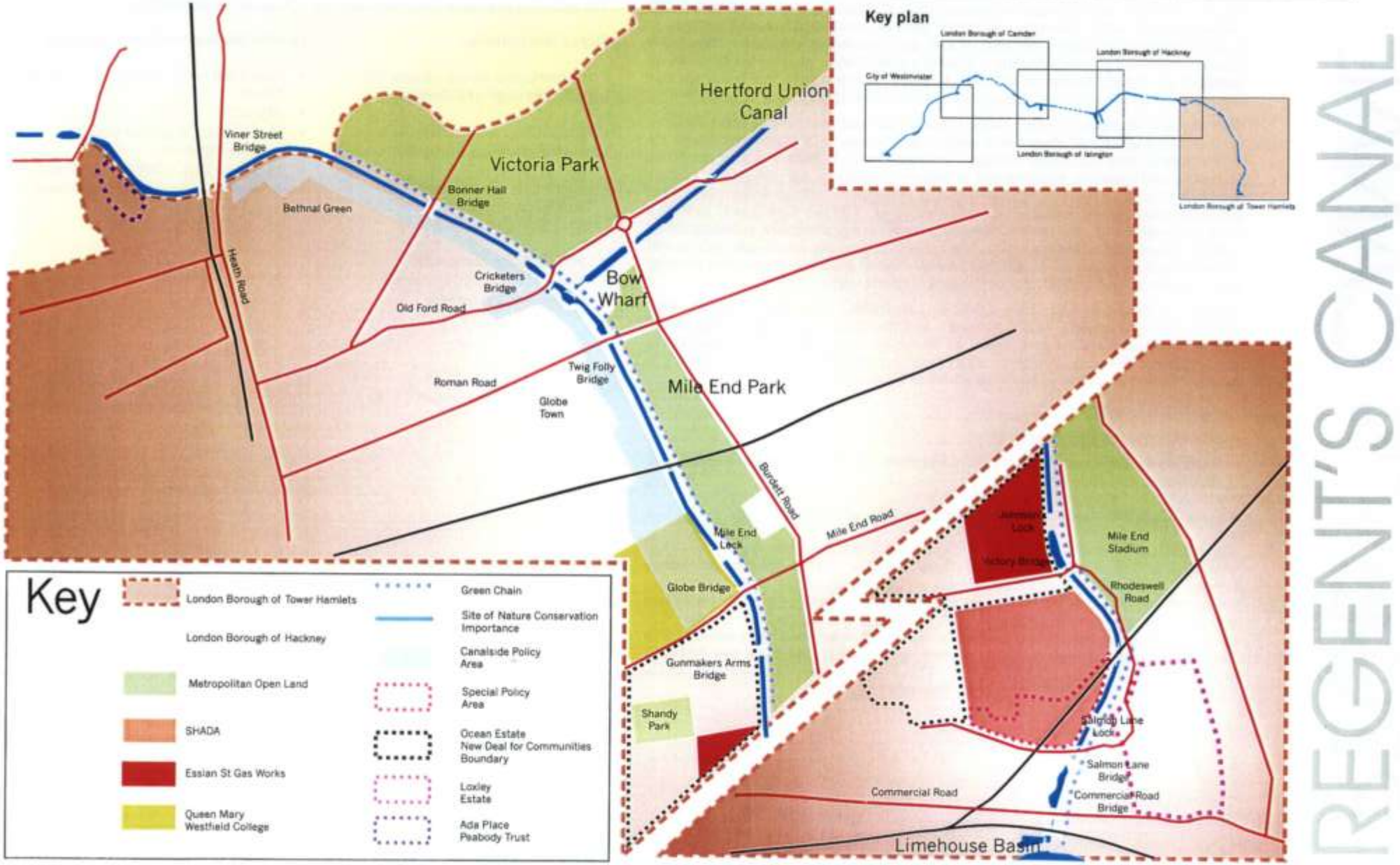
British Waterways

Planning context

London Borough of Hackney



London Borough of Tower Hamlets



REGENT'S CANAL

British Waterways

Local authorities are expected to ensure that all relevant aspects of their LTP (including road safety, planning and social policies) work together with policies to promote walking to achieve the goal of safe and sustainable transport. The LWS should show how the local authority is making it easier, safer, more pleasant and more secure to get around locally by walking. It should also recognise the important role that walking has to play in integrating other modes of transport.

Highway and streetscape design, traffic management and provision of other facilities such as crossings should always take walking into account. Suppressed demand for better facilities may exist where walking is currently limited. Such locations should be identified, and measures implemented to improve conditions for pedestrians. These are likely to include reallocating road space to pedestrians through wider pavements, pedestrianisation schemes and vehicle restricted areas. The aim should be to provide a clear, convenient and safe network of walking routes to key attractors, including urban centres, schools and major employers. Ensuring that there are direct, safe, well-lit and attractive walking routes to rail and bus stations, and to main bus stops, is an essential part of delivering good quality public transport opportunities.

Authorities should develop their LWS in partnership with other public bodies, commercial organisations, voluntary groups and the wider community. This should include consultation at an early stage, to ensure that provision is responsive to the needs of users. We plan to embark project to study methods for monitoring walking at the local level, with a view to providing advice to local authorities.

- Cycling in London
- Boat movements for tourist visits
- Integrated Transport Planning – particularly to benefit those people with disabilities.

Regeneration Initiatives under way along the Regent's Canal

The symbiosis between the canal and the surrounding urban environment is the key to unlocking its full potential as a recreational resource linking communities across London. Several districts and large housing estates exhibiting low social indices, that adjoin the canal are currently the target of regeneration initiatives funded in a variety of ways. The implications for the Regent's Canal and this Action Plan are that they offer a long overdue opportunity to remodel the interface between canal and city, and establish new physical links that have not been possible since the canal was first built or since the destruction in World War II. These opportunities also offer the chance for local people to re-establish a sense of ownership of the canal.

The following is a check list of initiatives on a Borough by Borough basis:

City of Westminster

- Lisson Grove Estate – Estate Action

London Borough of Camden

- Kings Cross Partnership SRB

London Borough of Islington

- Kings Cross Partnership SRB
- 10 Estates - Peabody Trust

London Borough of Hackney

- New Deal for Shoreditch
- Heart of Hackney Partnership
- Haggerston Partnership

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

- New Deal for Communities – Ocean Estate
- SHADA
- Queen Mary Westfield College campus expansion
- Mile End Park – Millennium Fund
- Bellways' Re-development of Essian Street site
- Stepney SRB Round One

6 HERITA

British Waterways

6 Heritage

The most un-celebrated aspect of the capital's primary waterway is its heritage. Heritage adopts many forms. For the purposes of this document four aspects of the Regent's Canal's heritage have been drawn out:

- Canal vernacular.
- Built heritage.
- Social history.
- Local associations.

The diagram titled 'Heritage' offers a cameo of images and themes suggested by these aspects of heritage. Although not a central theme to this Action Plan heritage is deserved of discussion because it unpins the attraction to tourists of the Regent's Canal. This 'resource' remains largely untapped.

As well as revealing two hundred years of engineered and built structures to the visitor, the canal, less obviously, harbours a varied social history and associations with communities and individuals. The latter includes those who lived around and worked on the canal as well as more prominent figures of society.

Bringing these different themes together, involving communities in relating their social history to a wider audience is fundamental to encouraging re-engagement with the canal, preserving the 'essence' of the canal experience and attracting more people to spend time on the canal.

It is hoped an HLF bid will be based on some of the initiatives and actions identified in this Action Plan. A successful project of this nature will require school and community involvement along with partnership with other agencies. Looking at heritage in the way described will support this and offers greater scope for matching areas of the national curriculum as well as creating greater 'time depth' and 'interest' for the visitor.

Public Art/Community Safety

Heritage also has connections with community safety and could be mutually inclusive to a public art strategy. Re-establishing identity and community ownership can contribute to creating a safer environment. The Crime Prevention reports by the Metropolitan Police have referred to the lack of good signage or bridge naming by which people can orientate themselves. This is likely to be one of the recommendations under the heritage actions.

Celebrating and linking the canal across the five boroughs (which surpasses administrative boundaries) can only be done by promoting the collective and linear heritage aspects of the Regent's Canal. It is hoped a public art strategy for the canal will do the same. The two could even be combined.

6.1 Social History

The social history of the Regent's Canal is an equally important aspect of the canal's heritage. Often overlooked, it is rich as a source of local history. This gives a greater 'time depth' to those areas through which the canal passes than just the canal. This is most evident in the legacy of street and place names. For instance Battlebridge Basin inherits its name from the battle fought between the Celtic Queen Bodicea and the Roman Army.

As well as people famous through history, the canal's existence generated livelihoods for many working Londoners. Carlo Gatti's ice-cream business prompted the transporting of ice along the canal. Icemen delivered ice to surrounding shops and businesses. There were also canalside power stations and hydraulic pumping stations, the latter that operated the curtain lifting mechanisms in the west end theatres.

The Ragged School Museum has an excellent public exhibition on the social history of the East End that includes the Regent's Canal. Local people have contributed their own anecdotes to give an insight into how people used to live and the background to the communities that existed close to the canal.

More recently the De Beauvoir Town Scrapbook Association produced a Millennium Scrapbook. This represents the people of the De Beauvoir Town area and gives a cross-section of views from living memory of the locality.

The diagram opposite gives an idea of the range of heritage issues that could form the basis of several strategic actions. These might take the form of a public art programme that reflects the heritage, people and places associated with the canal.

The range of famous and not so famous people who lived around, worked on or visited the canal to build up a social history resource that could be linked to the London Canal Museum and the Ragged School.

The heritage issues raised here may form the basis of a future HLF bid for the Regent's Canal which would aim to establish links with, and an educational resource for, local schools.

6.2 Built Heritage

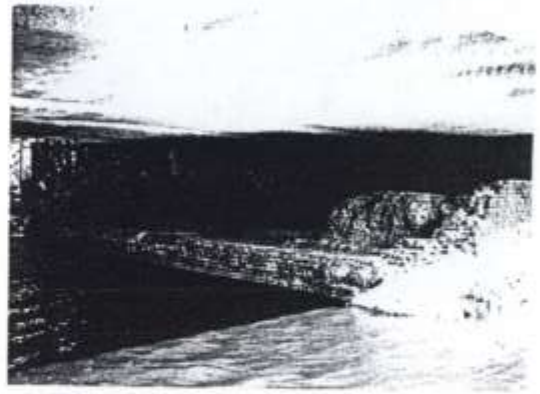
Eclectic Architectural Styles

The Regent's Canal is rich in of architectural styles and building methods for London over the previous two centuries. Uniquely, for British canals, it is predominantly characterised by polite architecture rather than the canal vernacular. These buildings and bridges give variety, vitality and visual interest along its corridor. Although a fantastic mixture of styles is found the buildings have great historic and cultural unity. London stock bricks are the predominant building material, characteristic of much of 19th century London. Of particular importance are:

- Stuccoed facades of villas around Little Venice.
- Nuffield Lodge and Hanover Lodge in Regent's Park.
- London Zoo including the Snowdon Aviary.
- Vincent Terrace.
- Gilbey's Warehouse and Pirate Castle at Camden.
- Fife Terrace.
- Sutton's Wharf with its overhanging jetty.
- Gas holders at St Pancras and Johnson's Lock.
- Ragged School Museum.
- Great Northern stable block and coal office at Kings Cross.
- Canal toll offices at Lisson Grove, Limehouse and Little Venice.
- Lock cottages and stables including lean-tos which housed back pumping gear.

REGENT'S CANAL

View to City

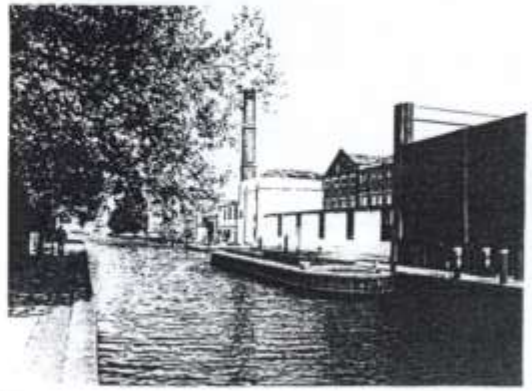


Old & modern bridge

Cumberland Basin

Horse ramp

Rope marks and bollards



Wharves and warehouses

REGENT'S CANAL

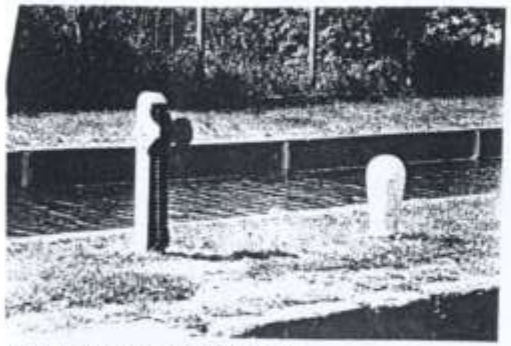
Distinctive double locks and cottages

Islington Tunnel

Mix of old & new

C20 iron railings

Kings Cross stop lock



Original C19 paddle gear

Limehouse Basin

C19 canal wharf

REGENT'S CANAL

Chronology of the Regent's Canal

1812 Construction commences on the Regents Canal

1818 Islington Tunnel opened

1820 Regents Canal completed

1830 Battle Bridge area re-named Kings Cross & work commences on the Hertford Union

1837 First railway from the Midlands reached London

1874 Explosion destroys Macclesfield bridge

1914 Canal taken over by the Board of Trade

Canal Vernacular

Social History

Built Heritage

Local Associations

Camden Town

Hoxton Market

Regent's Park

Islington Tunnel

Little Venice

Bow Common

Limehouse Basin

1929 Regent's Canal Company acquires the Grand Junction Canal creating the Grand Union Canal and resolving water supply problems

1956 Last barge towed by a horse

1963 British Waterways assume responsibility for canal

1968 City of Westminster opens towpath to the public

1973 British Waterways convert second locks into weirs

1982 Access to towpath re-opened through other London Boroughs

2000 Action plan prepared for the entire Regent's Canal

Chronology of the Regent's Canal

British Waterways

Film-People and Places

REGENT'S CANAL

Gainsborough Film Studios 1919 - 1949

In 1919 a former power station on the bank's of the Regent's Canal in Hackney was transformed into Hollywood's main British base

In 1924 independent film makers bought the building and the legendary Gainsborough Film Studios were born

Local children collected autographs of the major film stars and local people were employed and starred as extras in the films

Famous names who appeared in and created films here over the 28 year life of the studios included: Ivor Novello, Alfred Hitchcock, Will Hay, James Mason, Margaret Lockwood, Boris Karloff and Gracie

The site has been secured for re-development into 173 flats with an element of social housing, a restaurant, sculpture court and most importantly a new working film studio are also to be included in the scheme.

This once forgotten feature of local heritage was located, it is within the New Deal for Shoreditch boundary [illegible] the scene) it is accessible from the Regent's Canal, close to Hoxton Street Market and adjacent to Shoreditch Park which is also programmed for improvements.

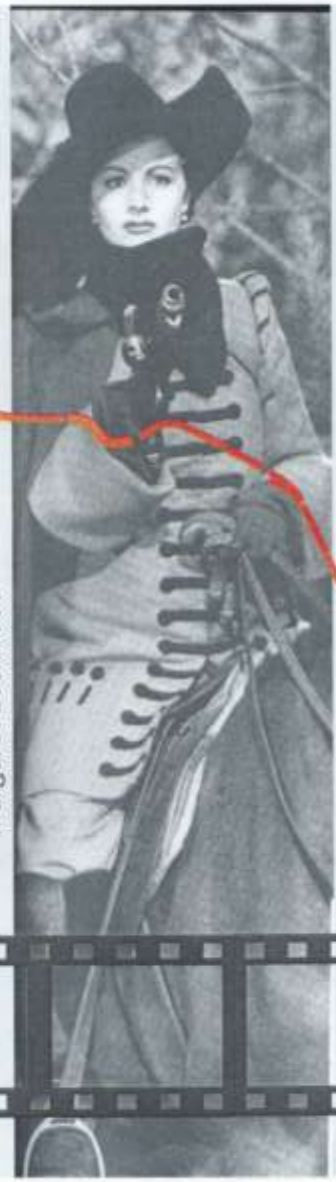
The former Gainsborough Film studios and its strong local associations will become one of a series of heritage attractions along a proposed Heritage Trail for the Regent's Canal

Poole St, Hackney

James Mason

Noel Coward

Will Hay



Margaret Lockwood

Rail and Road Bridges

The canal also has an eclectic mixture of bridge types many of which are listed including 36 road bridges, 9 foot bridges and 10 railway bridges. The significance that the heritage value that these bridges lend to the character of the canal is high. Some display wonderful architectural detailing such as the bridge over the disused arm to Cumberland Basin at Gloucester Gate, the Roving Bridge at Hampstead Road Locks and Bonner Hall Bridge and gate posts leading into Victoria Park. Others include early examples in the use of cast iron.

Many of the bridges have a colourful history such as Macclesfield Bridge (a beautiful bridge which is unfortunately masked by excessive vegetation growth) which was blown to pieces by a barge containing explosives as it passed underneath. Rebuilt it is known to this day as 'blow-up' bridge. A few bridges contain plaques or crests such as Warwick Avenue Bridge.

The most interesting feature of many bridges are the remains of earlier bridges underneath the more recent structure. Dozens are found along the entire length of the canal including Fitzroy Bridge, Whitmore Bridge and Thornhill Bridge. Whilst most later additions sit directly on top of the earlier structure some modern bridges are entirely separate structures leaving the original underneath. Here the remains of the original are reminiscent of an archaeological site. Euston Rail Bridge retains the original 1837 stone abutments by Robert Stephenson. Many of the original canal roving bridges dating from the pre-urban era can therefore still be found albeit incorporated into more modern structures.

Rope Marks

An interesting and well preserved feature to many of the bridges are rope groove marks to brick and stone abutments. These date from the era that boats were hauled by horses. They have survived on many bridges and are often cut into the fabric of the bridge itself. Alternately iron rope guards were placed to protect the stone or brick abutments, many of which survive. Good examples include Haggerston Bridge, New North Road Bridge, Hampstead Road Bridge, Bonner Hall Road Bridge and Hampstead Road Bridge. At Hampstead Road the roving bridge has groove marks to the iron hand rail. Some bollards also have rope marks, a good example is located at Kentish Road Lock.

Horse Ramps

Horse ramps are a characteristic feature of the regent's canal, but are relatively unusual within the canal system as a whole. They are ramps running out of the canal to the towpath to enable horses which had accidentally fallen into the water (often frightened by the rumble of trains passing overhead) to get out again. Few are in an original form above the water, but once the canal user is aware of their use they are easy to spot. Approximately 20 are found today, however the Railway Proposals Map of 1882 locates at least 10 of which have now been lost.

Mileposts and Boundary Markers

Several are located along the corridor including parish boundary markers, commemorative plaques and distance markers. These are found at Regent's Park, Cumberland Basin, Sturt's Lock, Kingsland Road Bridge and Mile End

Brick and Stone Retaining Walls

Many early examples of brick and stone retaining walls are found abutting the towpath and the canal. Of particular interest are walls to former wharves to the south side of the canal some of which display interesting patterns of bricks and stones. Suffolk Wharf, the area adjacent to North Road Bridge, Bangor Wharf and Commercial Wharf must all be noted. The wall on the opposite bank to the Ragged School contains the remains of pillars to a covered wharf. This was for the unloading of coal for the Gas, Coke and Light Company.

Stop Locks

The threat of Nazi bombs during the 2nd WW necessitated in the construction of a pair of stop locks at Kings Cross in order to protect the railway underneath. Each night these were shut to minimise the destruction that would have been caused had a bomb hit the canal. In addition stop locks are located at Little Venice, Camley Street and at the junction with the Hertford Union.

Bollards

There are many types of bollards found along the canal however, five principal bollard types can be identified. Bollards are more than often found in groups especially on the approaches to locks. In addition other features associated with the canal are found such as the iron winch at Hampstead Road Locks.

The Canal's Role in the Development of London

The canal's role in the development of London is threefold:

- to transport the everyday goods needed to sustain the world's largest metropolis.

"The advantages of such a canal to the public are incalculable, but amongst the most prominent is the supplying of the north side of the metropolis, for an extent of five miles, with water carriage. It will be another Thames at the back of the northern parts of the town, affording the like advantages of commerce and communications, as the River Thames itself".

(The Prospectus, 8th August 1811)

At the time the canal was constructed London was already the largest city in the world and expanding daily. The canal was central in the transportation of essential services for this ever increasing population. Coal, timber, ice, hay and manure were carried. To accommodate this trade wharves and basins had to be constructed many of which are still found today. Carlo Gattis Ice Wells for example were located at Battlebridge Basin. Of particular interest are the stone, brick and slate wharves necessary for a rapidly expanding city including, Thornhill Wharf, Gervers Stone and Marble Basin and St Marylebone Slate Yard. Much of the surrounding area was constructed with bricks which were carried by boat from the Medway towns via the Regent's Canal.

- The canal was associated with many important industries in London. These ranged in size from the huge Imperial Gas Works at Kings Cross, and generating stations to piano makers and pewter's. The London Hydraulic Power Company had their first station at Limehouse built by the Canal Company.
- The canal is intrinsically linked with the social development of the city. London Zoo is bisected by the canal with many of its listed animal houses adjacent to the canal. Many

REGENT'S CANAL

schools are found adjacent to the Regent's including the Ragged School one of the first established by Dr Barnardo's Homes in London. In Caledonian Road is the site of a plague pit. Several workhouses were located adjacent to the canal (now demolished). Sites along the canal corridor are named after landowners who sold their land to the canal company ie Thornhill Bridge. This provides a unique link with London's pre-industrial past.

Water Supply

The canal suffered a shortage of water for working the locks. The original Act prohibited the use of water from the Grand Junction Canal. In response an experimental lock involving water filled caissons was designed by William Congreve. This was built and tested at Camden but later abandoned as unworkable. 120 acres of Finchley Common was purchased for the purpose of forming a head of water to feed the canal via a nine mile feeder. It was soon realised however that this was only sufficient to supply enough water for two lock-fulls a day. A plan to supply water from the Thames at Chelsea was also abandoned as the water was considered too filthy.

In 1835 the Company acquired the concession from the Grand Junction Canal to dam the River Brent to create the Brent Reservoir (known today as the Welsh Harp) in Hendon. In an attempt to save this precious supply of water locks were constructed in pairs with interconnecting sluices between two chambers so that they worked together - like side ponds. The paddle was raised by means of a rack and pinion on a post between the locks. These double locks are an important feature contributing to the unique character of the Regent's Canal. Several still retain important original features including the original central rack and pinion at Johnson's Lock and large granite coping stones. Today only one lock in each pair is operational with the other forming a weir.

Summary

To date a comprehensive archive, document and map search has been completed. This has principally involved locating different sources and documenting what type of material is held where. If appropriate, documents have been copied and used as a base document for the successful completion of the photographic record. The archive section at BW is the primary archive office for most sources. In addition the British Library, local record offices, Public Record Office and canal museums hold records. Many local amenity groups also have information and have produced some useful interpretation documents. A comprehensive set of maps has however been gathered. These date from the pre-canal age to present including 1st and 2nd series Ordnance Survey. Of particular relevance are the 1882 Board of Works Maps held at the London Metropolitan Archives. These represent a corridor study of the Regent's proposing a change of use to railway.

A photographic study from Little Venice to Limehouse has been completed, with 400 photographs of all principle features which give the canal its character. This has primarily focused on heritage sites such as bridges, basins, horse ramps, parks and wharves. Each photograph has been plotted on a map and any relevant information recorded alongside.

From this it has been possible to find certain themes which are distinctive to the Regent's Canal. Rather than focusing on individual structures or sites these themes cover the length of the canal reflecting the linear nature of certain characteristics. Horse ramps and rubbing posts for example are found from Little Venice to Limehouse. The canal's role in the development of London has also been examined briefly.

Preserved in several locations are the remains of the back pumping scheme which pumped water from the Thames to Kentish Town Lock. At Commercial Road Bridge a pipe is found crossing the canal which carried the water. To the north of the bridge is an iron inspection cover and control valve. Pumps stood in small lean tos adjacent to lock keepers cottages at Mile End Lock, Old Ford Lock, Sturt's Lock, St Pancras Lock and Kentish Town Lock. Some of these lean tos are found today.

Other Characteristics

The corridor has many splendid mature trees and landscaping. It also runs adjacent to three important London parks (Regent's, Victoria and Mile End), in addition to many much smaller landscaped spaces. Seating and litter bins often display iron work indicating the Regent's or the appropriate London Borough and in some places early surface treatments including cobbles are found.

The canal, principally by location has a long association with famous people and events particularly the history of television, music and the cinema including Gainsborough Studies, TV-AM, Planet 24, Abbey Road and the Holburn Studies.

In certain locations 'sound' is an interesting characteristic. The contrast between absolute quiet (broken only by bird song and the sound of culverts entering the canal) in certain stretches with the noise of urban London in others is stunning. At the majority of locks one of the pair has been converted into a weir. Here the sound of water cascading into the lower section is particularly appealing.

Archive search includes

BW Heritage Register
BW Architectural Heritage Survey
WES Archives
BW Archives - Gloucester (450 entries)
BW London Office Records

Public Record Office
British Library Map Section
English Heritage Library
London Canal Museum
Stoke Bruerne Museum

IWA London Branch
London Borough of Hackney
London Borough of Camden
City of Westminster
London Borough of Islington
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Islington Local Library

Swiss Cottage Library
Hackney Archives
Westminster Library
London Metropolitan Archives

Stella Elyeka, David Mander, Alan Faulkner, Martin Sahon, Michael Essex-Lopresti, Roger Bowderlerbut, Eric Robertson.

7 ECOLOGY

British Waterways

INTRODUCTION

This report on the Regent's Canal biodiversity is based on a cycle-through of the canal and a desk study using numerous sources, including data from the London Ecology Unit. Unfortunately most of the information known about the ecology of the canal originates from the 1980s. Therefore the information is very dated and further ecological surveys should be undertaken.

CURRENT DESIGNATED SITES OF CONSERVATION INTEREST ON AND ADJACENT TO THE REGENT'S CANAL

The entire London canal network, including the Regent's Canal, has been designated a Site of Metropolitan Importance for nature conservation as a result of its intrinsic value for wildlife and because it provides public access to nature; the latter is particularly important where canals pass through the inner city boroughs.

As well as the canal itself there are many sites of borough importance and local importance adjacent to the canal. These sites are very valuable, not only on an individual basis, but because they widen the canal wildlife corridor. The canal provides a link between these pockets of ecological interest and open spaces.

BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVES RELEVANT TO THE REGENT'S CANAL

The London Biodiversity Action Plan

The London Biodiversity Audit, launched in January 2000, highlights canals as one of 15 habitats in London that form London's biodiversity resource. It highlights the canals, including the Regent's, as providing a network of linear wetlands that support a wide range of wetland communities and species.

British Waterways are committed to preparing the Canal Habitat Action Plan for the London Biodiversity Action Plan.

Borough Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs)

Westminster has produced a draft Local BAP which highlights the importance of the canal to contributing to Westminster's biodiversity.

OVERVIEW OF THE ECOLOGY OF THE REGENT'S CANAL

HABITATS

Channel

Most of the canal does not support extensive areas of aquatic or emergent vegetation. However a wide variety of plants do occur where the conditions are favourable, including several species of pondweed eg fennel-leaved and curled pondweeds and soft hornwort, which is very rare in London. Other aquatic plants found include rigid hornwort, white water-lily, blunt-leaved pondweed, spiked water-milfoil and fat and greater duckweeds.

The Environment Agency take samples for chemical water quality at two sample points on the Regent's Canal every month. The two sample points are at Camley Street, Kings Cross (NGR TQ 300 834) which is used to assess water quality in the canal from Camden Road to the Hertford Union Canal, and at Solebay Street, Mile End (NGR TQ 357 832) which is used to assess water quality in the canal from Hertford Union Canal to the River Thames.

The Environment Agency classifies water quality using their own system called the General Quality Assessment (GQA). The canal is given a GQA (chemical) score every year and this is a useful indicator of the water quality. The GQA classification ranges from A (good) to F (bad).

The GQA grade at Camley Street, Kings Cross in 1996 was C, in 1997 it was C and in 1998 it was D. The water quality is still fair but there has been deterioration in 1998 due to a reduction in dissolved oxygen and a slight increase in biochemical oxygen demand. This is probably caused by algae being fed into the canal upstream of Camden Road from Brent Reservoir. The slow flowing conditions in the canal exacerbate the algal problem. The algae exert a biochemical oxygen demand during respiration at night, thus increasing the biochemical oxygen demand concentration and reducing the dissolved oxygen concentration in the canal.

At Solebay Street, Mile End the GQA grade in 1996 was B, in 1997 it was C and in 1998 it was D. Again, the water quality at this sample point is fair but there has been deterioration in water quality since 1996. This has been caused by a significant increase in biochemical oxygen demand and a slight reduction in dissolved oxygen. There are no known sources of pollution on the Regent's Canal in this area and it is thought that the problems are caused by the algal activity in the canal upstream as discussed above. There are also occasional high concentrations of chloride in this area, from an unknown source. The source and impact of the high concentrations of chlorides in the canal is probably worth further investigation.

Channel margins

The canal banks are vertical and comprised of brick, stone, concrete or sheet piles. This is poor habitat for aquatic and emergent vegetation. However in some small sections, predominately on the offside banks, emergent vegetation does occur.

Sweet-flag, garden angleica, marsh woundwort, water dock, galingale and branched bur-reed are marginal plant species have been recorded, along with reed sweet-grass, gypsywort, celery-leaved buttercup, hemlock water-dropwort, common skullcap, reed canary-grass, trifid bur-marigold, redshank, yellow iris water-cress and fool's water cress.

Towpath and towpath verges (bank verge & boundary verge)

The verges vary in width and floristic diversity along the canal's length. Verge management also varies, with some section being left uncut with wildflower growing, while other sections are closely mown.

7 Ecology

The towpath verges support a range of mostly common grassland and ruderal plants including a high proportion of non-natives. Yarrow, ribwort, greater plantains, bent grass, wall barley, clovers and trefoils, are especially common on the canal verge. Taller common species here or on the towpath verge include mugwort, the fleabanes, common mallow, nettle, creeping thistle, black horehound and bristly oxtongue.

Boundary

The boundary feature of the Regent's Canal varies in character along its length although high brick walls on both sides feature heavily, especially at the western end. Plants such as buddleia, ivy and ferns have colonised the high boundary walls. Towards the east in the Boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets the canal corridor opens up in several places due to areas of parkland and green space adjacent to the canal.

Offside and adjacent land

The Regent's Canal is generally a very urban canal, especially at its western end, where adjacent land is predominately developed. However there are many pockets of green space and sites of Borough Importance and Local Importance that are adjacent to, and linked by the canal. These include Regent's Park, Camley Street Natural Park, Victoria Park and Mile End. Partnerships between managers of these areas and the canal should be encouraged in order to undertake joint schemes to increase biodiversity in the area and increase awareness of biodiversity amongst the local communities.

SPECIES

Birds

The waterway and adjoining land provide suitable habitats for many bird species, both migrant and breeding. From the records available it appears that birds have been recorded on an ad hoc basis. A few species are known to breed along the length including coot, moorhen, mallard and tufted duck. Mute swans with young and Canada geese are also seen. The towpath, and adjacent scrubby/wooded habitat, supports small birds including wren, blackcap, song thrush, goldfinch, dunnock, robin, blue tit, blackbird, starling, jay, wood pigeon and magpie.

Grey herons hunt all along the canal, nesting in Regent's Park. Kingfishers are occasionally seen flying past Camley Street Natural Park in Camden along with the occasional pied and grey wagtail. The rare black redstart has also been report at Camley Street. Cormorants, black-headed gulls, common terns, great crested grebe, pochard, housemartins, swallows, swifts and common sandpiper have also been seen.

Fish

Roach, bream, perch, carp, tench, eels, gudgeon, ruffe, pike and occasional chub and dace have all been recorded in the Regent's Canal.

Invertebrates

Damselflies and dragonflies, eg common blue damselfly have been recorded along the canal despite the lack of emergent vegetaion. Large white, comma, small tortoiseshell and meadow brown are some of the butterflies seen.

Plants

The canal allows several species of plant that are rarely found in London to penetrate into the City. Examples of this are the skullcap, marsh woundwort, and trifid bur-marigold.

Aliens

There are several species of alien plants growing along the length of the Regent's Canal eg the London bur-marigold which is naturalised from North America. It was first noted here in 1977 and its British population is concentrated along London's canals. California brome, thorn-apple and cultivated flax are also alien species found along the canal.

Alien animals include red-eared terrapins and Turkish crayfish.

Strategic recommendations

- Ensure that environmental protection remains a central theme of the London's Waterway Partnership initiative.
- Ensure that regeneration/redevelopment of the canal corridor does not result in the loss of habitats or species.
- Ensure any increase or change in recreational use does not adversely affect the canal's biodiversity.
- Use the British Waterways Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), London BAP and local BAPs to guide biodiversity initiatives on Regent's and influence all projects on the canal, from regeneration schemes to day to day management.
- Ensure the involvement of wildlife groups and key users such as walkers, anglers and boaters in partnerships and schemes in order to increase awareness of biodiversity issues.
- Undertake sympathetic landscaping schemes using native vegetation to enhance biodiversity.
- Seek to increase aquatic and emergent vegetation along the canal wherever suitable.
- Review towpath verge management and seek to increase biodiversity of the verges.
- Undertake further ecological survey work to update our knowledge of the biodiversity along the canal.
- Work in partnership with adjacent land owners/managers to enhance biodiversity on and adjacent to the canal corridor.

- Increase public awareness, and local community involvement in biodiversity on the canal.

ECOLOGICAL REVIEW OF THE CANAL AT BOROUGH LEVEL

The following section provides an overview of the ecology of the Regent's Canal within each of the five boroughs through which it passes. Much of the information is based on dated accounts and further ecological study is recommended. Recommendations for conserving and enhancing biodiversity are suggested for each Borough along with annotated A3 maps.

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

The ecological data for the City of Westminster were obtained from material held by the London Ecology Unit, including 'Nature Conservation in Westminster' City of Westminster, LEU, 1997.

Ecological summary

The Regent's Canal constitutes an important wildlife corridor in Westminster, enabling wetland plants, such as skullcap and marsh woundwort , to penetrate into the heart of London. It supports a few species of breeding wildfowl, including coot, moorhen, mallard and Canada geese and small areas of scrub and woodland provide habitats for woodland/garden birds and links to other areas. It also supports a variety of coarse fish, dragonflies and damselflies and other invertebrates. Bats have also been recorded.

The western end of the canal in Westminster is very urban in nature but very picturesque from Little Venice, with its ornamental island, along the treeline approach to Maida Vale Tunnel. The ornamental island has weeping willow and lime tree with occasional elder and privet undergrowth. Several species of bird have been recorded on the island including moorhen, coot, canada goose, tufted duck, mallard, dunnock, jay, wood pigeon, magpie, robin, starling, blackbird, blue tit, mute swan, cormorant and heron.

There are a few wetland plants such as skullcap and gypsywort growing in crevices in the canal wall, along with ferns and buddleia. Other interesting species include water dock, trifid bur marigold and pendulous sedge.

Further east, the landscape becomes much greener, with a steep woodland bank on either side around the edge of Regent's Park. Around the zoo, the canal-side vegetation is managed as tall herbs and scrub, with abundant cow parsley earlier in the year. Notable species, usually growing out of the cracks in the vertical brick/concrete bank, include skullcap, gypsywort, redshank and sometimes trifid bur-marigold. Liverworts occur along the shaded damp walls.

Herons hunt along the canal, nesting in Regent's Park. Mallard, coot and moorhen nest in this area, and many song birds such as blackcap, song thrush and goldfinch can be heard from the wood.

The Westminster Local Biodiversity Action Plan highlights the importance of the canal to contributing to Westminster's biodiversity. However it also concludes that improvements could be made to increase wetland flora and habitat for birds and invertebrates. British Waterways are mentioned within the local BAP as being an acting agent in bats, parkland, small skipper and water's edge plans.

Adjacent sites of interest

Regent's Park. Adjacent to the canal, much of the park is of low conservation value but the lake, shrubberies and semi-natural woodland areas provide significant habitats for birds.

Recommendations for enhancing biodiversity on the Regent's Canal in the City of Westminster

- Retain flora on the walls, eg ferns and buddleia wherever possible.
- Survey Maida Vale tunnel for bats and if appropriate install bat bricks.
- Plant aquatic and emergent vegetation along the offside in areas where canal widens (eg old loading bays and wides).
- Encourage the growth of ivy on walls.
- Improve the bio-diversity of the amenity area before Lisson Grove with native planting.
- Retain trees and areas of woodland along the canal, especially after Chapel bridge.
- Treat and control the alien invasive Japanese knotweed which is found along the canal at London Zoo.
- Encourage the local community and schools to become involved in ecological activities along the canal eg community planting projects and educational packs such as Waterways Challenge.

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

Data for the London Borough of Camden were obtained from material held by the London Ecology Unit, including 'Nature Conservation in Camden' LEU, 1993.

Ecological summary

The Regent's Canal is an important habitat within Camden supporting a surprising number of plants and animals, some of them very rare in inner London. The canal's popularity makes it one of the Borough's best-used sites for the appreciation of wildlife.

The canal in Camden starts at Regent's Park in the West and meanders through Camden Town to leave the borough at York Way: a total length of around 2.75km.

Several species of submerged aquatic vegetation have been recorded in the channel including several species of pondweed eg fennel-leaved and curled pondweeds and soft hornwort, which is very rare in London.

Bankside plants include gypsywort and three uncommon species in London, marsh woundwort, skullcap and trifid bur-marigold. Also of interest is the London bur-marigold which is naturalised from North America. it was first noted here in 1977 and its British population is concentrated along London's canals. Other plants in the stonework include various species of willowherb, hemlock water-dropwort, and another uncommon plant in London, hemp-agrimony.

The towpath is mostly bordered by a high brick wall which obviously restricts the opportunities to improve the site for wildlife. To west of Gloucester Avenue mature trees and shrubs overhang the opposite bank, where access is restricted to the owners of the gardens which come right down to the canal. This bank, with stands of marginal plants, including the graceful pendulous sedge.

The usual species of birds occur along the canal including coot, moorhen, mallard, tufted duck and mute swans. Opposite Camley Street Natural Park grey wagtails, kingfishers and the nationally rare black redstart have occasionally been seen. Grey herons feed in the shallows and in summer swallows, swifts and house martins hawk low over the water for insects.

Eels, dace, roach, carp, perch and some very large pike are known to occur in the Camden section. Turkish crayfish have been recorded in the canal near Camden lock and a released red-eared terrapin is frequently seen near Camley Street Natural Park.

Adjacent sites of interest

Regent's Park. Adjacent to the canal, much of the park is of low conservation value but the lake, shrubberies and semi-natural woodland areas provide significant habitats for birds.

Camley Street Natural Park, run by the London Wildlife Trust, is a great example of modern urban habitat creation. The park features a variety of habitats including wet and dry woodland, areas of fen vegetation and a central pond. The park is used by all sections of the community and is particularly valuable as an education centre for school children of all ages.

Recommendations for enhancing biodiversity on the Regent's Canal in the Borough of Camden

- Remove sycamore saplings after Grafton Bridge and plant with native species.
- Retain ivy on bridges.
- Encourage existing ivy on boundary walls and plant ivy on sections of bare boundary wall.
- Increase the bio-diversity of the boundary verge by reviewing the grass cutting regime and adopting a method to enhance floristic diversity.
- Improve the verges around Camden Market through appropriate reseeding/planting and management.
- Plant aquatic and emergent species in areas where the canal widens (eg old loading bays and wides).
- In partnership with Royal Mail, improve the biodiversity of the offside bank adjacent to the sorting office.
- Control Japanese knotweed, an alien invasive, where it occurs.
- Encourage aquatic and emergent vegetation at double locks, where one lock can be left unused.
- Seek to create suitable habitat for birds such as kingfishers and the rare black redstart.
- Create a partnership with London Wildlife Trust at Camley Street Park in order to improve the biodiversity of the canal adjacent to the park and to exchange ideas and skills on urban conservation.
- Encourage the local community and schools eg Primrose Primary school Should, to become involved in ecological activities along the canal eg community planting projects and educational packs such as Waterways Challenge.

ISLINGTON COUNCIL

Data for the London Borough of Islington were obtained from material held by the London Ecology Unit, including 'Nature Conservation in Islington' LEU, 1992.

Ecological Summary

A short section of the Regent's Canal (1.8 km) passes through the Borough of Islington, including the Islington Tunnel. The two open sections support an interesting flora and fauna typical of open water. This habitat is exceedingly rare in a Borough having no large water bodies and few ponds. The towpath and banks support grassland, woodland and scrub, together forming an extremely important wildlife corridor.

Canadian pondweed, fennel-leaved pondweed, curled pondweed and spineless hornwort, which is very rare in London, have all been found in the channel, particularly near the City Road Basin.

Cracks in concrete bank include gypsy-wort, buddleia, Canadian fleabane and several uncommon species, including common skull-cap, lesser hairy willow-herb, hemlock water dropwort and the introduced connate bur-marigold.

Hart's-tongue and male ferns are found at the entrance to Islington Tunnel.

Woodland banks between Caledonian Road & Muriel Street and the tunnel to Danebury Street provide good habitat for birds with dunnock, goldfinch, blue tit, robin, blackbird, wood pigeon and wren.

Eel, pike, roach, perch and dace have all been recorded from the canal in Islington.

Coot, moorhen, mallard, tufted duck all breed in the area and mute swans are frequently seen.

Recommendations for enhancing biodiversity on the Regent's Canal in the Borough of Islington

- Increase the diversity of the towpath verges, especially between York Way and Caledonian Road by adopting a suitable management regime.
- improve biodiversity in Battlebridge and City Road Basin by providing areas for birds to roost and planting emergent vegetation where appropriate.
- survey Islington tunnel for bats and if appropriate, install bat bricks.
- retain vegetation on walls.
- retain wooded banks between Caledonian Road and Danebury Street and manage the habitat for birds. Install bird and bat boxes where appropriate.
- seek to plant emergent vegetation, especially along the York Way-Caledonian Road section.
- plant aquatic and emergent vegetation in one of the double locks.
- encourage the local community and schools to become involved in ecological activities along the canal eg community planting projects and educational packs such as Waterways Challenge.

LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY

The ecological data for the Borough of Hackney were obtained from material held by the London Ecology Unit and dates from the 1980's.

Ecological Summary

Although the canal is very urban in nature it provides an important wildlife corridor through Hackney. The canal has a number of basins in the borough which have the potential to become important conservation, educational and recreational areas.

Areas of historical ecological importance include Wenlock Basin, Stuart's Lock, Baring Street section and Dunston Road. These areas should be re-surveyed to establish there current ecological importance.

Hemlock water dropwort, water dock, rigid hornwort, marsh woundwort, bulrush, branched bur-reed and amphibious bistort have all been recorded as occurring on the canal in Hackney.

Moorhens and coot are known to breed along the length and dragonflies have been recorded.

Recommendations for enhancing the biodiversity of the Regent's Canal in the Borough of Hackney

- Undertake an ecological survey of Wenlock Basin with the view of creating a conservation area in partnership with conservation groups.
- Re-survey Stuart's Lock and retain any existing vegetation.
- Encourage vegetation along Baring Street through planting schemes.
- Seek to improve the biodiversity in the adjacent playground at Arlington Avenue, through appropriate planting.
- Create, in partnership, a conservation area at the end of Kingsland Basin.
- Emergent planting has taken place between Haggerton Bridge and Queen's Road Bridge. Further planting and community projects should be encouraged in suitable areas.
- Encourage the local community and schools to become involved in ecological activities along the canal eg community planting projects and educational packs such as Waterways Challenge.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

Data for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets were obtained from material held by the London Ecology Unit, including 'Nature Conservation in Tower Hamlets' LEU, 1996.

Ecological Summary

The canal in the Borough of Tower Hamlets has a more diverse range of aquatics plants compared to other Boroughs. Canadian waterweed and curling, shining, fennel and broad-leaved pondweeds have been recorded. Curled pondweed is most common in London area, shining pondweed, which flourishes in the canal in Stepney, is otherwise rarely found in London, and broad-leaved and fennel pondweeds are uncommon. Other aquatic plants found include rigid hornwort, white water-lily, blunt-leaved pondweed, spiked water-milfoil and fat and greater duckweeds.

Sweet-flag, garden angleica, marsh woundwort, water dock, galingale (near Johnson's Lock) and branched bur-reed are marginal plant species that have been recorded along the edges of the canal in Tower Hamlets. Reed sweet-grass, gypsywort, celery-leaved buttercup, hemlock water-dropwort, common skullcap, reed canary-grass, trifid bur-marigold, redshank, yellow iris water-cress and fool's water cress are some of the more common wetland plants to be seen.

The towpath verges in Tower Hamlets support a range of mostly common grassland and ruderal plants including a high proportion of non-natives. Yarrow, ribwort, greater plantains, bent grass, wall barley, clovers and trefoils, are especially common on the canal verge. Taller common species here or on the towpath verge include mugwort, the fleabanes, common mallow, nettle, creeping thistle, black horehound and bristly oxtongue. London-rocket, a rare alien, was discovered in 1995 on a bridge

over the canal at the end of Solebay Street. California brome, thorn-apple and cultivated flax are other alien species found along this section of canal.

Several lengths of the canal are bordered by tress or shrubs, either self-established or planted, including lime, sycamore, elm scrub, bramble and hawthorn which attract birds such as wren and blackbird.

The water supports good populations of aquatic invertebrates providing food for fish. Stocks are topped up from the Royal Parks and anglers frequently catch roach, bream, gudgeon, carp and tench. Eels are also present.

The canal system is a stronghold for smooth newts, as well as being an important habitat for damselflies and dragonflies, such as the common blue damselfly, and butterflies including the small tortoiseshell, meadow brown and others. Bats have also been recorded along this section of the Regent's.

The usual birds are seen eg coot, moorhen, mallard, grey heron and mute swan. Common tern and common sandpiper have been recorded at Limehouse Basin.

An area highlighted in past surveys is a small area of acidic grassland on a steep bank next to the towpath north of Commercial Road. Records indicated that it is dominated by bent grass, but also contains sheep's sorrel, bird's-foot-trefoil and a cup –forming reindeer lichen. Although not species-rich, it is worthy of note as acid grassland is rare in the Borough. Further survey work is required to establish whether this habitat is still in existence.

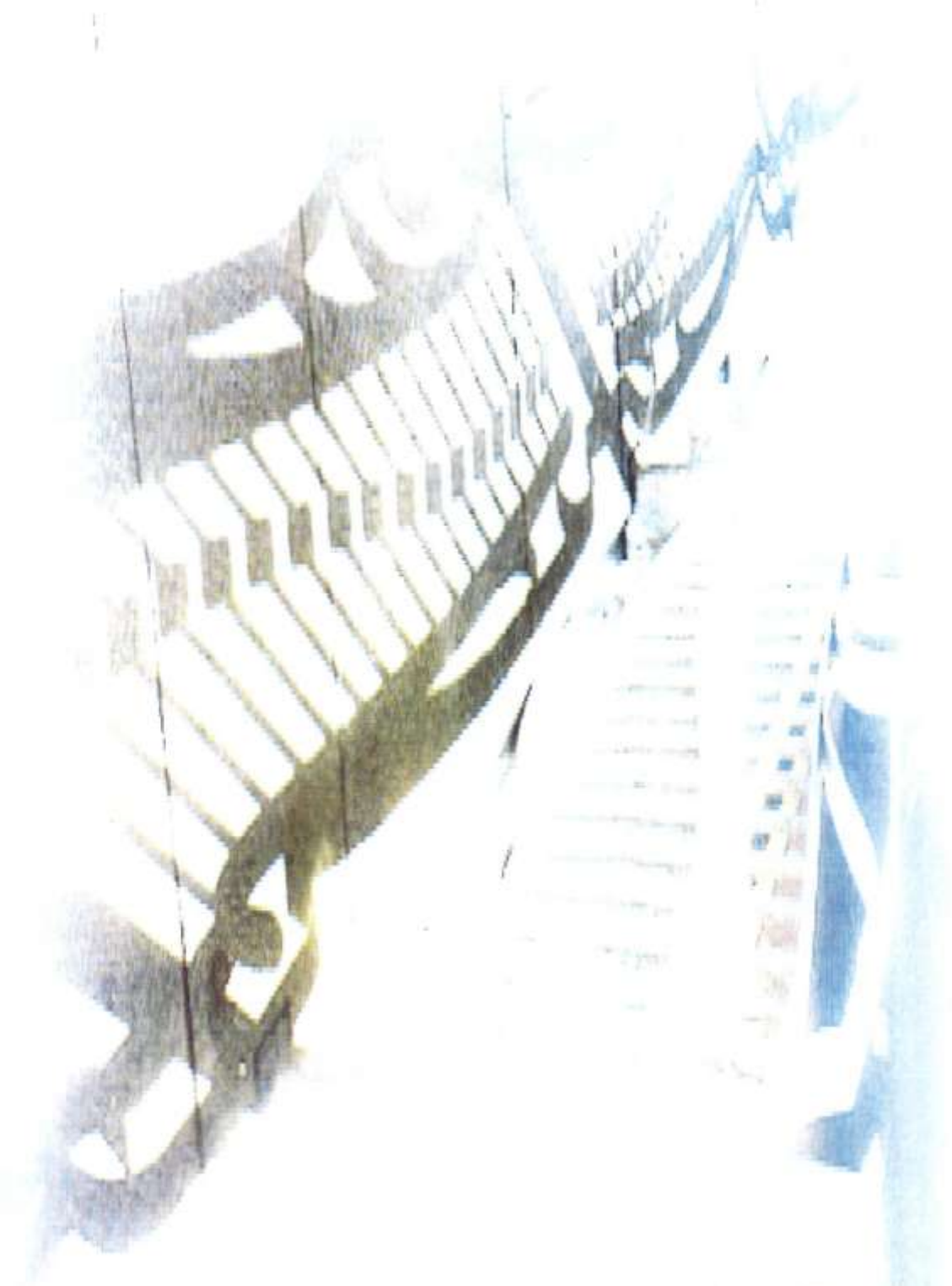
Adjacent sites of interest

Victoria Park. The park dominates the northern part of the Borough and is bounded on two sides by the Regent's and Hertford Union canals. Two ornamental lakes have coot, swans, great crested grebe, pochard, Canada geese, tufted duck, moorhen. The park is an important site for bats with pipistrelles and noctules both feeding there.

Mile End Park. This park provides an excellent example of how the canal corridor can be widened. First opened in 1952 the park has been planted with a wide range of native and non-native plants. Of interest is the presence of London-rocket, a rare alien plant.

Recommendations for enhancing the biodiversity of the Regent's Canal in the Borough of Tower Hamlets

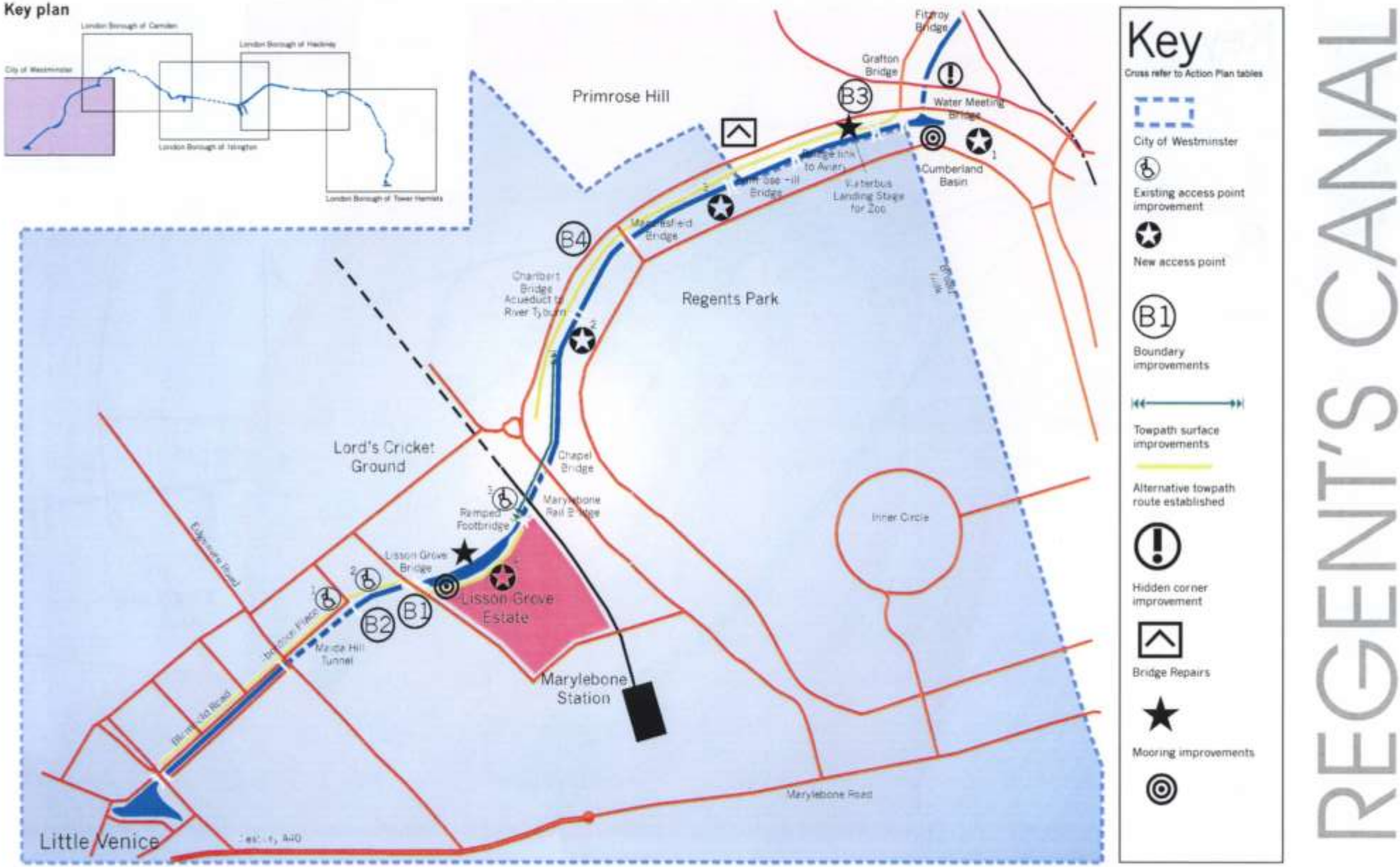
- Increase the bio-diversity of the towpath verges, especially at Mile End Park, through appropriate management.
- Undertake emergent planting in appropriate areas, eg old loading bays and wides.
- Retain the good wall flora and bird boxes on the offside.
- Retain and extend the significant section of emergent vegetation on the offside, opposite Victoria Park.
- Increase the bio-diversity in the area where Hertford Union Canal meets Regent's.
- Retain and extend the reed sweet grass growing in recesses adjacent to Bath Gardens' Depot and railway land.
- Survey and manage the area of scrub by the gasworks for birds and other wildlife.
- Seek partnership with the landowners/mangers of Victoria Park and Mile End Park to enhance the biodiversity along the canal corridor and adjacent land.
- Encourage bats along the section by installing bat boxes on suitable buildings and trees.
- Manually skim the alien water fern if it is still creating a problem.
- Re-survey the canal in the borough, especially the Mile End stretch which is a historically rich section for biodiversity.
- Encourage the local community and schools to become involved in ecological activities along the canal, eg community planting projects and educational packs such as Waterways Challenge.



8 Target sites

City of Westminster

Recommendations



Recommendations

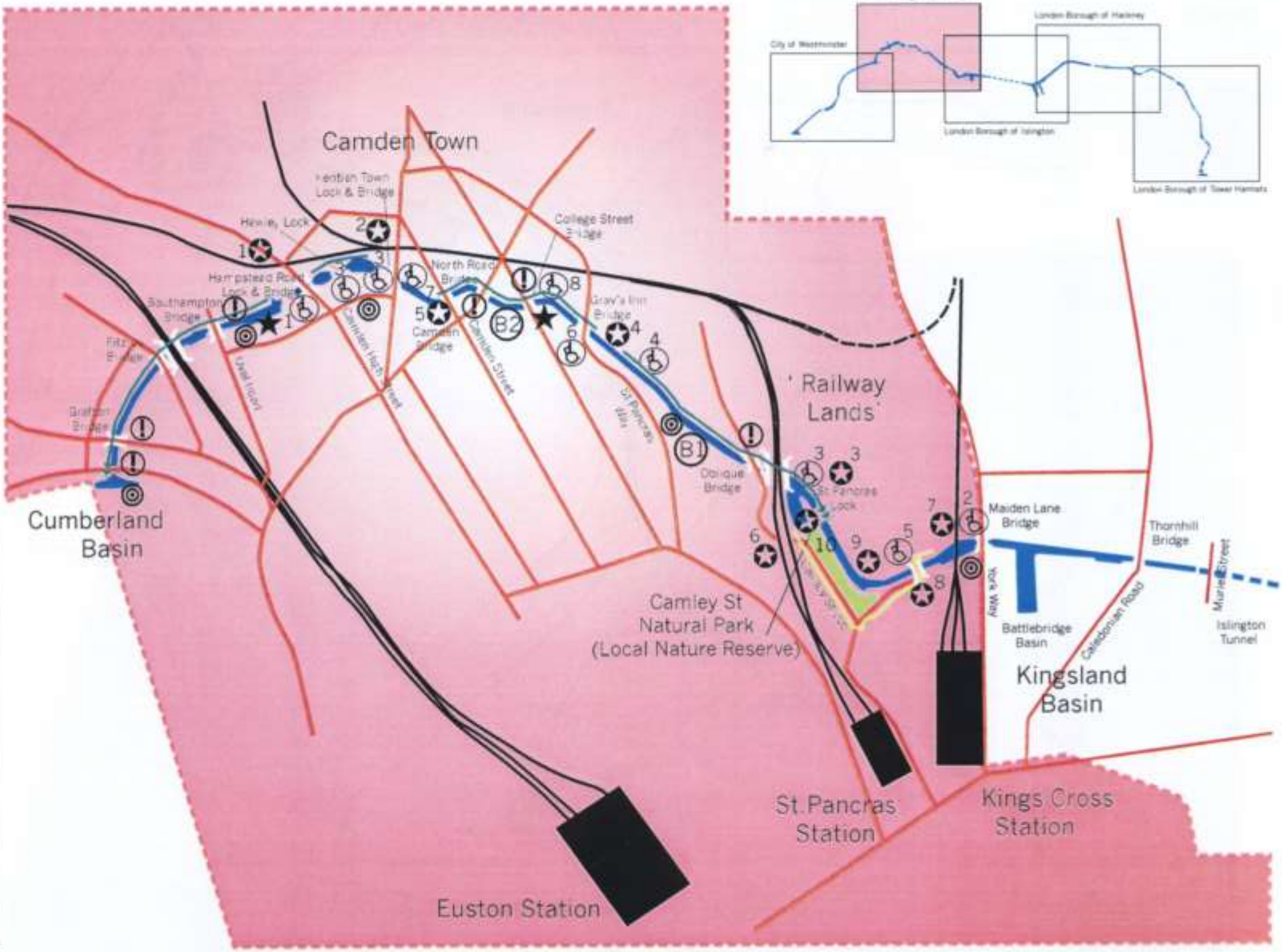
London Borough of Camden

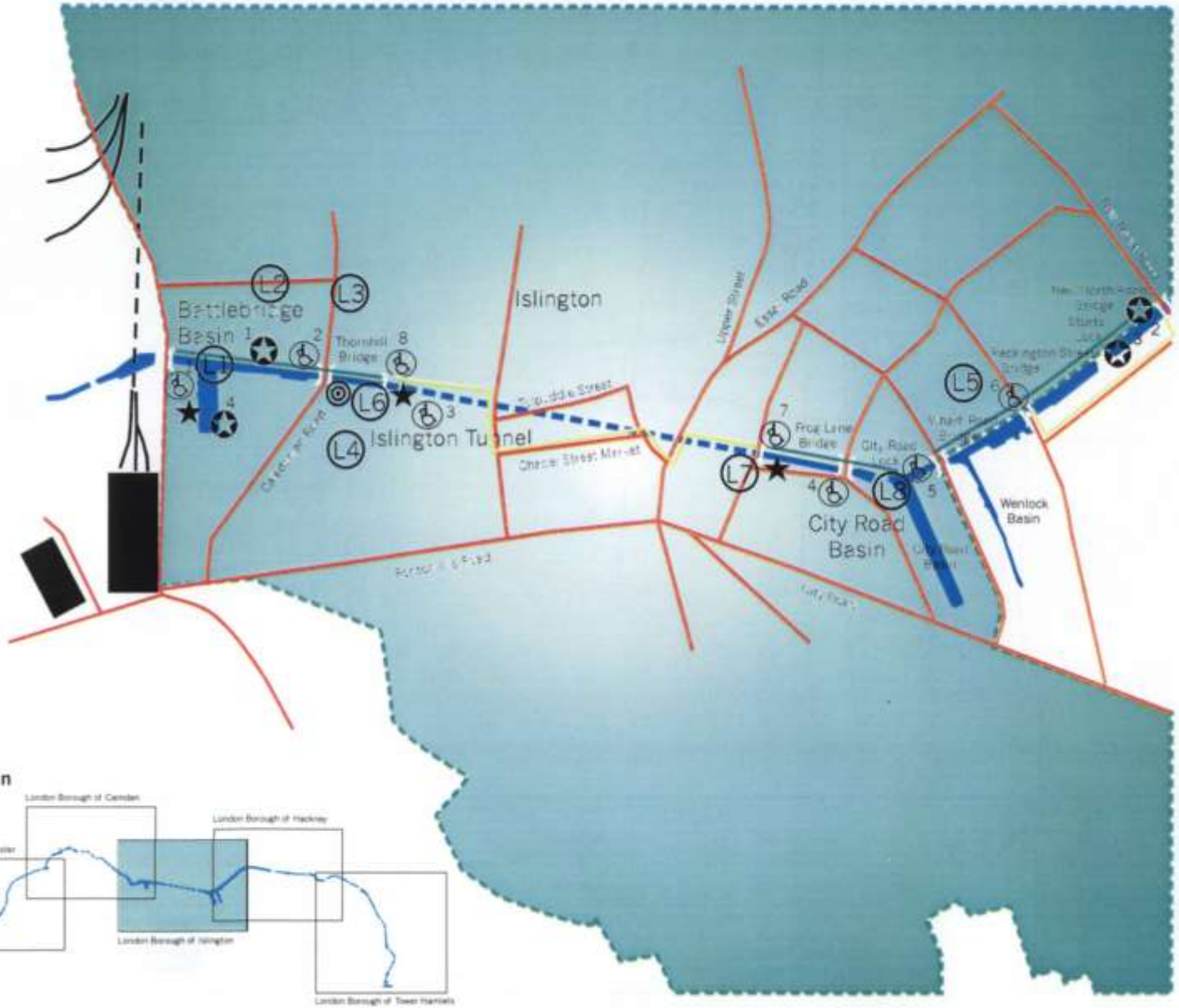
REGENT'S CANAL

Key

Cross refer to Action Plan tables

- London Borough of Camden
- Existing access point improvement
- New access point
- B1 Boundary improvements
- Towpath surface improvements
- Alternative towpath route established
- Hidden corner improvement
- Bridge Repairs
- Mooring improvements
- Aquatic and emergent planting



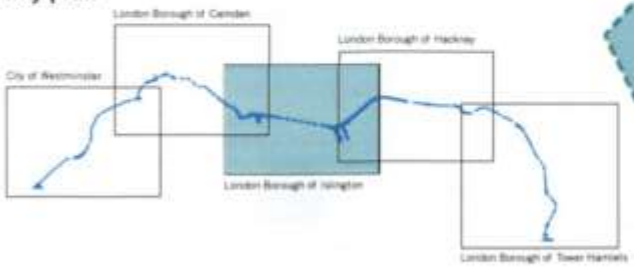


Key

Cross refer to Action Plan tables

- London Borough of Islington
- Existing access point improvement
- New access point
- L1 Landscape improvements
- Towpath surface improvements
- Alternative towpath route established
- Hidden corner improvement
- Bridge Repairs
- Mooring improvements
- Aquatic and emergent planting

Key plan


London Borough of Camden
City of Westminster
London Borough of Hackney
London Borough of Islington
London Borough of Tower Hamlets

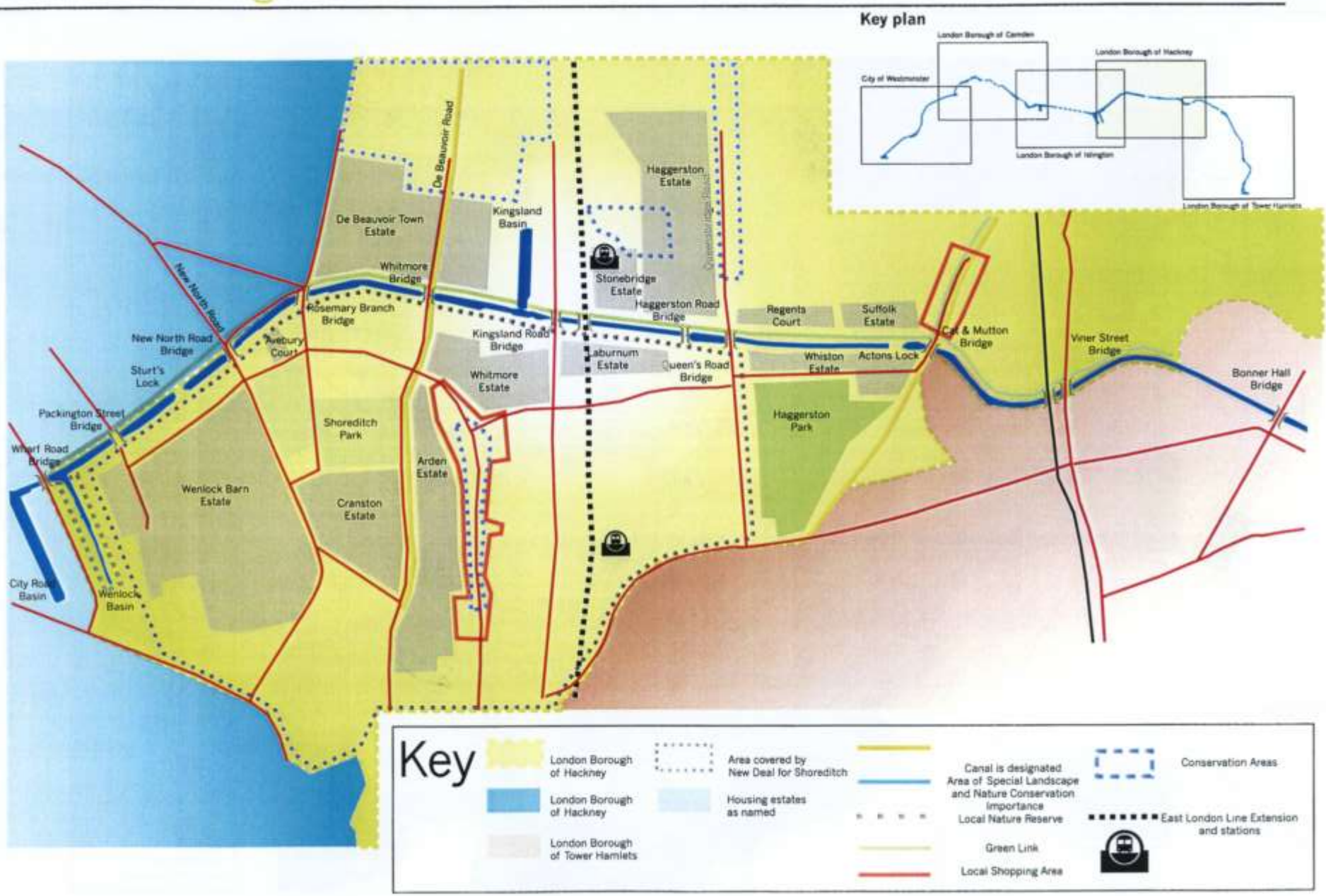
REGENT'S CANAL

British Waterways

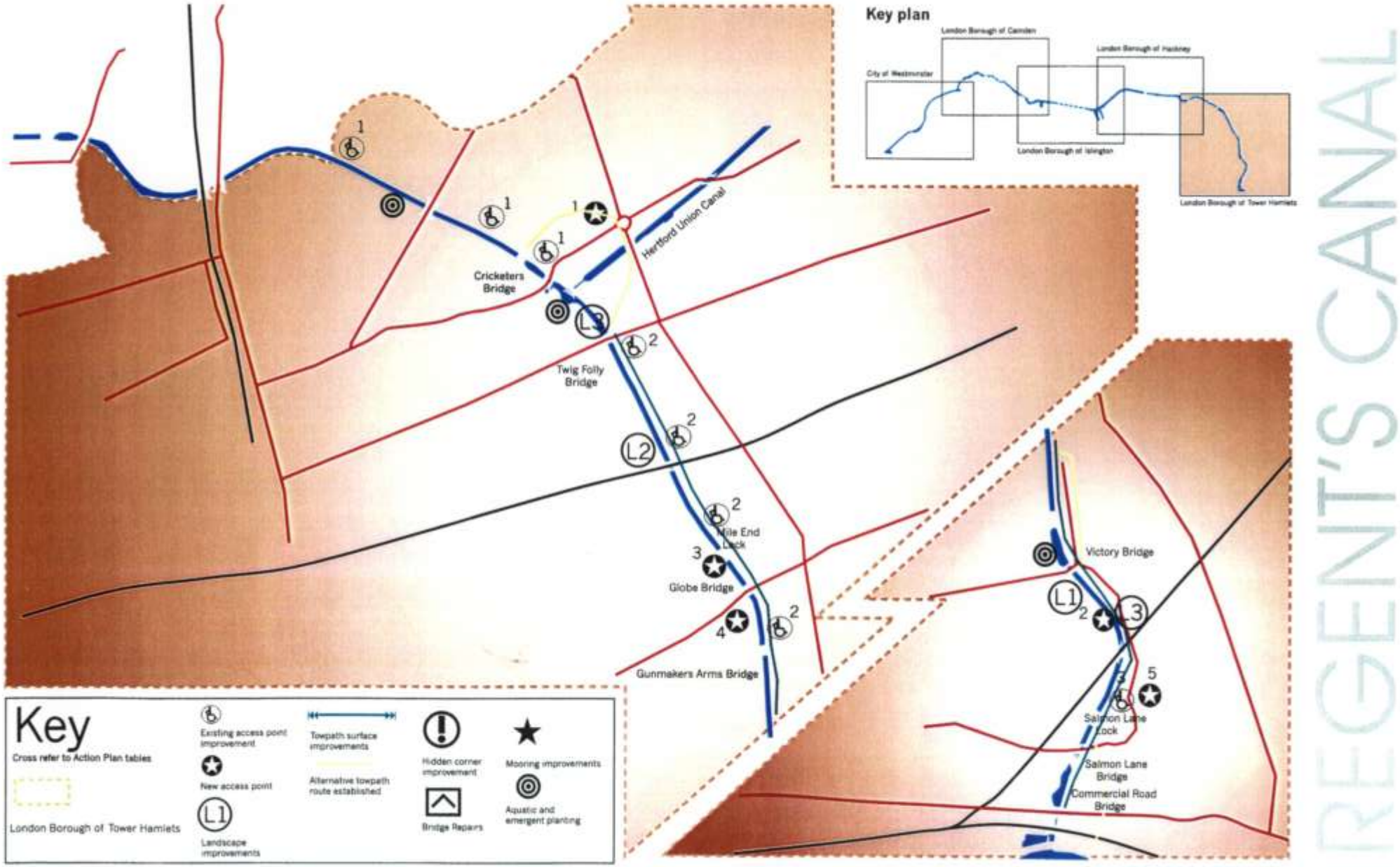
Planning context

London Borough of Hackney

REGENT'S CANAL



London Borough of Tower Hamlets



9 Action Plan

British Waterways

Action Plan : Strategic Proposals 9

Map Ref №	Proposal :	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Programme access initiative – to provide in a comprehensive way information on visiting and enjoying the canal. This may be in locations geographically remote from the canal such as libraries, schools, community facilities and tourist information offices. Similarly information should be in formats accessible to people with different disabilities or impairments. Such a proposal would require commitment across Boroughs and would require the expertise of other organisations and bodies with a long term aim to improve and sustain the availability of information particularly so that people with disabilities can make informed choices about their visit to the Regent's Canal.	London Boroughs British Waterways Housing Associations Community Groups User Groups Complementary funding agencies	Long term	Not yet known	
	Strategic Access Plan – Whilst the following groups of proposals on a Borough by Borough basis include localised access improvements there needs to be a co-ordinated approach. There is no point in improving access at one location with no thought as to the destination and the ease of access at the destination. Similarly, improving access immediately adjacent to the canal is pointless if there are access problems in the surrounding streetscape that preclude arrival at the canal in the first place. A well considered programme of physical improvements should be undertaken in the surroundings to the canal to fully address the access issue. This is closely linked to the issue of programme access.	London Boroughs British Waterways Housing Associations Community Groups User Groups Complementary funding agencies	Long term	Not yet known	
	Heritage interpretation - A project covering the entire length of the Regent's Canal to interpret and reveal some of the historic features, local history and local associations should be undertaken. This could be community focussed particularly working with schools and building on the Regent's Education Pack launched by British Waterways. Many apsects of such a project would also help resolve some of the other user issues such as orientation for visitors via a clear bridge naming initiative. A complementary Heritage Lottery Bid is proposed for the Regent's Canal which could involve interpretation consultants which could develop and expand this proposal.	London Boroughs British Waterways Housing Associations Community Groups User Groups Complementary funding agencies	Long term	Not yet known	
	Bridge naming/identification and Signage – The Crime Prevention Officers identified a need to give users reference points since some sections of the canal can appear visually anonymous. One way of doing this is to have a comprehensive sequence of naming/identifying bridges that is the same from Borough to Borough. Similarly replacement signage should be co-ordinated across Boroughs in a way that is robust and is appropriate in heritage terms.	London Boroughs British Waterways Housing Associations Community Groups User Groups Complementary funding agencies	Long term	Not yet known	

Map Ref Nº	Proposal :	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Biodiversity – Many of the localised habitat improvements proposed in section 7 would benefit from a co-ordinated and holistic approach. A biodiversity action plan is being prepared for the Regent's Canal and for London. This should underpin an initiative to create sustainable plant and wildlife communities along the Regent's. There is an opportunity to link up the Royal Parks, Lee Valley Regional Park and local parks with the new Ecology centre at Mile End Park as a long term community resource that provides information and creates opportunities for social inclusion and education.	London Boroughs British Waterways Housing Associations Community Groups User Groups Complementary funding agencies	Long term	Not yet known	

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Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Existing Access Point Improvements					
EA1	Redesign entrance to towpath from Aberdeen Place – including lighting, gateway feature, signage and interpretation.	British Waterways Groundwork Housing Association for Cheadle Court	Short Term	£15k	
EA2	High level walk through Cheadle Court as alternative to towpath route – definition of route through estate, removing barriers, demarcating public/private space and improving gateway onto Lisson Grove.	British Waterways Groundwork	Short Term	£10k	
EA3	Undercroft, approaches and environs of Lisson Grove ramp and Marylebone Line railway bridge. Predominantly resurfacing works.	**Groundwork** British Waterways Daggeo National Grid	Short Term	£15k	Re-paving, signage and information. Possible climbing plants to walls etc.
New Access Points					
NA1	Create formal link to/from Zoo car park and Prince Albert Road – link to Water Meeting Bridge access point.	London Zoo Royal Parks City of Westminster		£5k	
NA2	Create route to access standard from towpath to Charlbert Bridge.	Grove House British Waterways Royal Parks		£30k	
NA3	Create route up from towpath to Primrose Hill Bridge and Primrose Hill.	Grove House British Waterways Royal Parks	Medium-term	30k	
NA4	Lisson Grove high level route through estate. Gateway onto Lisson Grove and links into public open space in housing areas.	Lisson Grove Estate Daggeo	Short Term	£100k	(£40k contribution from Daggeo).

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Other Access Improvements					
A1	Provision of ten number resting points.	British Waterways Groundwork	Short Term		These may take the form of seating but combined with passing places where sections are narrow. Signage and interpretation could be located at some of these points.
A2	Review and implement route that follows Regents Canal from Little Venice to Lisson Grove Estate – predominantly Programme Access and way-marking, ensuring streetscape is all to full access standard . Gateway improvements are identified separately.	City of Westminster British Waterways Developers as part of Paddington Basin Royal Parks (as part of Royal Parks walk connecting Hyde, St James and Green Park)	Short Term	£ not yet known	Establish dialogue between Royal Parks and Paddington Basin developers, Chelsfield, to develop Royal Parks Walk.
A3	Re-laying of slabs/resurfacing to towpath to remove trip hazards	National Grid	Short Term	£100k	
Upgrading Towpath to Access Standards	Re-lay block paving along Regents Park towpath section to comply with access standard ie reduce cross-fall.		Long-term	£?	Particularly expensive.
Programme Access Improvements	Initiative with local authority, local access groups and tourist office to provide information on access for people with disabilities.	City of Westminster Royal Parks LB Camden British Waterways Developer at Paddington (Chelsfield)		£20k	Signage in surrounding neighbourhoods, leaflets and information in alternative formats. Primrose Hill playground has public toilets accessible by people with disabilities.
Strategic/Green Links	Negotiate opening up of Grove House open space and creating alternative footpath to Access standard linking Charlbert, Macclesfield and Primrose Bridges	Royal Parks Grove House Management Agency British Waterways	Long-term	£60k	

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the Visitor Experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Boundary Improvements					
B1	Boundary of council depot on the offside in need of improvement.	City of Westminster City of Westminster British Waterways	Short Term	£8k	
B2	Improve views of and setting to Maida Hill Tunnel eastern portal. Review National Grid cable housing and design of steps.	National Grid British Waterways National Grid City of Westminster	Long-term	Intermediate	
B3	Create access into the grounds of St Mark's Church from the towpath. Improve boundary treatment. Church already sell cream teas in summer months.	Church Commissioners British Waterways Royal Parks	Medium-term	£50k	
B4	Remove visually intrusive chain link fencing along Regent's Park section of towpath and offside. Replace with appropriate new design where required because of retaining wall. Works to wall as necessary.	British Waterways Royal Parks British Waterways Grove House	Short Term	£100k	
Graffiti Removal					
	General removal along length.	British Waterways Thames '21' City of Westminster	3 years	£75k	£25k each year.
Key Site Landscape Improvements					
K4	Primrose Hill Bridge repairs and improvements.	London Zoo **Royal Parks** **British Waterways**	Medium-term	£400k	Bridge Grade II listed by Henry Grissell. Issue of replacement railings reproducing those of footbridge from Broad Walk also by Henry Grissell. Identify both bridges with interpretation. Barrier to be removed and path widened.
New or Improved Moorings					
	Extend visitor moorings along Regents Park section CHECK	**British Waterways**	Long Term	£10k	

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the Visitor Experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Improve environs to existing Lisson Grove moorings, security gates, signage and lighting.	**British Waterways** **Daggeo**	Short Term	£15k	
	Community/Trip Boats				
	Create London Zoo trip boat landing stage on towpath side.		Medium Term	£3k	
	Replace Zoo embarkation shelter and replace benches.	**London Zoo** **British Waterways**	Short Term	£10k	
	Wider London - Canal/Waterway Links				
	Establish interpretation of Regent's Canal on Primrose Hill.	Royal Parks British Waterways	Short Term	£2k	
	Promote wider Royal Parks trail/long distance walk that uses the canal and Paddington Arm.	Royal Parks Chelsfield British Waterways City of Westminster	Short Term	£8k	
	Healthy Living Area - initiatives				
	Promote "Strolathan" and other events by working with Healthy Cities Initiatives.	British Waterways City of Westminster	All years	£5k	
	Public Art programme				
	Extend and promote Royal Parks Public Art programme and 'Talking Trees' and 'Sound Zones' initiative onto towpath and environs.	British Waterways Royal Parks London Zoo Private Business	Medium-term	£60k	Initiative would be beneficial for people with visual and hearing impairment
	Lisson Grove and moorings opportunity for community led Public Art intervention as part of wider strategy.		Short Term	£20	Ramped bridge could be focus for public art identifying the area. 'Bridging' the boating and estate communities.

Map Ref №	Proposal : Signage/Bridge Naming	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Co-ordinated appropriate signage and bridge naming for every bridge - partly for community safety.	British Waterways National Grid	Short Term	£20k	

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Heritage and Interpretation	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Heritage Feature Improvements				
	Heritage Interpretation Part of strategic initiative across Regent's Canal but develop as part of associations with conservation areas around canal.		Short-term	£15k	
	Canal Community Scrapbook/Local Distinctiveness Initiative Develop above involving Lisson Grove residents and boaters at Lisson Wide along with schools.	Local Education Authority British Waterways Lisson Grove Estate	Short Term	£5k	
	Local History and Conservation walks in and around the Regent's Canal Develop leaflet for comprehensive set of circular walks visiting St Johns Wood, Fisherton Estate, Maida Vale and Lords Cricket Ground etc.	British Waterways City of Westminster Private Funding	Short-term	£20k	

Map Ref №	Proposal : Ecology and Wildlife and Maintenance	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Animal Ramps To complement horse ramps on key sections such as Regents Park..	British Waterways	Long Term	£3k	
	Knotweed Control Treat and control knotweed along canal at London Zoo.	British Waterways City of Westminster Royal Parks	Long Term	£2k	
	Landscape and Habitat Creation Native planting introduced to Lisson Grove area.	British Waterways Lisson Grove	Short Term	£?k	
	Aquatic Planting Plant aquatic and emergent vegetation along offside where canal widens	British Waterways City of Westminster	Medium Term	£5k	
	Bat Boxes/Bricks Install bat boxes or bricks to Maida Vale Tunnel.	British Waterways	Medium Term	£1.5k	

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Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Ecology and Wildlife and Maintenance	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Mile End Park Ecology Centre – Canal Project as Link through Boroughs Royal Parks have expressed interest to signing up to be part of London's Bio-diversity Action Plan. Embankments either side of the towpath through the park are Designated Nature Reserve.	Mile End Park Partnership London Ecology Unit	All year		Outline cost to be determined. London Ecology Unit signed up to do survey of species in park. Stag Beetle is evident.
	Develop interpretation/information focusing on canal as major habitat resource.	London Boroughs British Waterways Environment Agency English Nature			

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Visitor and Community Safety Initiatives	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Guardians on the Waterway Agreement for Royal Parks police to patrol towpath on regular basis.				
	Safer routes to School With local schools in Camden and Westminster to create routes along towpath - linked with guardians on the waterway.				
	Windows on the Waterway Develop opportunities for views onto waterway.	City of Westminster LB Camden			
	Lighting – Canal Highlights Bridge undercroft lighting to Chiltern and Metropolitan Line bridges and other bridges identified by the Metropolitan Police.	British Waterways National Grid City of Westminster (revenue)		£80k	
	User Conflict Management Slowing of cyclists – blind corner/hazard warning at Water Meeting Bridge.			£1.5k	
	Community Ownership Scheme				
	Education Pack Design and sale of Park/Zoo/Canal specific pack.	British Waterways Royal Parks London Zoo	Medium-term	£5k	

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Existing Access Point Improvements					
EA1	Camden High Street east – limited access improvements to Market area (not towpath proper – giving access to wharf).	**Groundwork** British Waterways Local Business LB Camden	Medium-term	£3k	Minor works such as improving handrail, re-laying small section of cobbles, removing trip hazards and improving signage.
EA2	Maiden Lane Bridge (York Way) reconstruct ramp to remove stepped ramp to max 1:12 with landings for every 830 mm rise.	**Groundwork** British Waterways London Continental Housing Association LB Camden LB Islington	Medium-term	£50k	Housing Association ownership?
EA3	Explore opportunities for improving access at lockside ramps at Kentish Town, St Pancras and Hawley Locks. To include resurfacing, handrails and environmental upgrade of setting.	**Groundwork** British Waterways		£60k	Problematic if ramp re-profiling was to be considered.
EA4	Presently there is ramped access from the back of the Jubilee Waterside Centre to the canal towpath for the benefit of the users of the centre. The access is shuttered off as it is private. At certain times of the day/year, this access point could become a controlled access facility for the residents of Elm Village through consultation between the local community and the Jubilee Waterside Centre.	Jubilee Waterside Centre Camden Village Association British Waterways	Medium-term		Outline Cost: Possibly no physical works costs. Minimal physical works required. Consultation/negotiation required between Jubilee Waterside Centre and Camden Village Association.
EA5	There is access at present across Goods Way Bridge from Goods Way through a gate, but it is permanently locked. With the possible redevelopment of the former GNR goods yards, the reopening of this access point could be achieved.	Developers British Waterways London Borough of Camden National Freight Company London Continental Railways			Outline Cost: Possibly no physical works costs. Seek through planning gain during the redevelopment of the Railway Lands.
EA6	Re-work entrance from Gray's Bridge (west) by removing brick pillars that obscure views.	British Waterways	Medium-term	£20k	
EA7	Retain and upgrade steps onto Kentish Town Road possibly as part of redevelopment of Nº 39 immediately adjacent.	British Waterways	Medium-term	£5k	
EA8	Re-working of entrance, signage and reconstruction of ramp and steps from College Street Bridge (East).		Medium-term	£30k	

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Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
New Access Point					
NA1	Appraise and implement a new access route to disability standard through Camden Lock complex exploiting Camden Lock Place as alternative route to cobbled towpath ramp. Re-work surfacing, signage and facilities (toilets) around wharf (currently with timber deck). This should link to new embarkation point for people with disabilities.	British Waterways Management Co for Camden Market LB Camden Suffolk Wharf Developer (see Section 106)	Medium-term	£25k	
NA2	Kentish Town Bridge potential ramp into open space alongside lock. Design and development of open space. Important to create accessible route from Camden Road overground station	British Waterways	Long-term	£20k	This would preclude the need for new ramp at Camden Bridge
NA3	The development of the former railway goods yards next to Wharf Road would lead to increased public use of that area and the then possible need for access to the canal. One ideal location is just above St Pancras Lock where there is room for steps and ramped access.	Developers British Waterways London Borough of Camden National Freight Company London Continental Railways	Long-term		Outline Costs: Further development of proposals required before cost can be assessed Seek through planning gain during the re-development of the Railway Lands.
NA4	Possible improvements to the Constitution Public House include a basement bar at canal level, which could include an entrance from the towpath.	Constitution Public House British Waterways	Long-term		Outline Costs: Further development of proposals required before cost can be assessed
NA5	New access from Camden Street from Camden bridge alongside Nº 20-23 Camden Gardens. See note above.	British Waterways Sainsburys	Priority weighed up against other access opportunities	£45k	Arose from limited public consultation. Requirement of increasing height of retaining wall to properties to one side. There are alternative access opportunities along this length giving equal benefits.
NA6	From Camley Street there is no present public access to St Pancras Lock and lock keeper's cottage garden. The opportunity to create an access would need to be discussed with St Pancras Cruising Club, Camley Street Natural Park and any occupiers of the lock keepers cottage and security issues considered.	British Waterways Camley Street Natural Park London Borough of Camden St Pancras Cruising Club	Medium-term	£15k	
NA7 (refer to EA2)	A ramped access is feasible from Wharf Road down to the towpath just west of the electricity pumping station. This is an alternative to installing a ramp to full access standard to the eastern access to Maiden Lane Bridge.	**Groundwork Camden** British Waterways London Borough of Camden National Grid National Freight Company London Continental Railways	Medium-term	£40k	British Waterways ownership

Map Ref №	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
EA8	Goods Way Bridge has no present access to the canal towpath, but there is ample opportunity for stepped access from Wharf Road should the former railway goods yards ever get redeveloped.	**Developers** British Waterways London Borough of Camden National Freight Company London Continental Railways	Long-term		Outline Cost: Further development of proposals required before cost can be assessed. Seek through planning gain during the re-development of the Railway Lands.
EA9	The position of the former fish and coal offices building adjacent to the towpath would make it a prime building to be renovated with canal usage in mind. The filled in arches at its base leading straight onto the towpath would make ideal controlled access points for whatever functions the building takes on.	**Developers** British Waterways London Borough of Camden National Freight Company London Continental Railways	Long-term		Outline Cost: Further development of proposals required before cost can be assessed.
EA10	Create access across StPancras lock to Camley Street Ecology Park to full access standard.	British Waterways British Waterways Camley Street Natural Park London Borough of Camden St Pancras Cruising Club	Long-term	£13k	This footbridge would be dependent on access being obtained from Camley Street. Negotiations would be required with the St Pancras Cruising Club.
Other Access Improvements					
A1	Remove gates at Water Meeting Bridge, Fitzroy Bridge.	**British Waterways** Groundwork Camden	Short Term	£1.5k	Linked to cross borough maintenance agreements with British Waterways.
A2	A sequence of seven signage improvements needed at road level for most bridges but particularly Fitzroy, Southampton, Kentish Town, North Road, College Street, Grays Inn and Oblique Bridge.	**British Waterways** Groundwork Camden	Medium-term	£3.5k	
A3	Create approximately eight passing places between Hampstead Road Bridge and Gray's Inn Bridge.	**British Waterways** Groundwork Camden	Medium-term	£3k	
A4	Install comprehensive and appropriately located seating – as part of passing place installations.	**British Waterways** Groundwork Camden	Medium-term	£15k	
A5	Negotiate with Sainsburys to install road crossings to improve access to store that still requires use of towpath up to College Bridge ramp.	**British Waterways** Groundwork Camden	Long-term	£?	Sainsbury canal sponsor signs/information for moorers
A6	Improve surface to steps on Fitzroy Bridge. Non slip treatment and lighting.		Long-term	£4k	
A7	Develop alternative "street level" route to avoid St Pancras Lock - possibly passing through Camley Street Natural Park.	LB Camden London Continental	Medium-term		

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Upgrading Towpath to Access Standards					
	The towpath throughout is blighted by the presence of concrete paving slabs which follow the course of the National Grid cable line which is laid under the path. A mixture of materials have been used in conjunction with the concrete slabs resulting in an unattractive, poor quality pedestrian surface. A towpath improvements scheme is proposed as a priority throughout the London Borough of Camden to improve the image and character of the canal and create a user friendly environment striving where possible to meet 'Access for All' standards. Comprehensive resurfacing is required, in conjunction with rationalisation of the towpath delineation and width in order to both facilitate access and retain a sustainable grass strip.	British Waterways Groundwork Camden City of Westminster LB Camden LB Islington National Grid	Medium-term	£200k	Negotiations are under way with National Grid who would be key partners in this project.
Programme Access Improvements					
	Initiative with local authority, local access groups and tourist office to provide information on access for people with disabilities.	LB Camden London Tourism Bureau Local Businesses	Medium-term	£20k	Key issue about Regents as a strategic route is that it is more beneficial to people with disabilities to travel west to east because of fall in topography from Camden to Limehouse.
Strategic/Green Links					
	Bloomsbury Link/Metropolitan Circular Walk heading south then west into Regents and returning to Canal. Alternatively – linking to Clerkenwell east into Shoreditch also returning to the canal.	LB Camden LB Islington LB Hackney	Medium-term	£10k	Identifying waymarking and promoting route
	Signage for Oval Road local cycleway link from Southampton Bridge – link with Safeway Supermarket for boaters/visitors.	Safeway	Medium-term	£2k	

Map Ref №	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the visitor Experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Total Costs for Boundary Improvements					
	Estimated costs of pursuing individual canalside boundary improvements are difficult to determine without the owner's or tenant's involvement. It is proposed that the most effective way to take this forward would be through the creation of a boundary improvements initiative based on a 75% SRB grant scheme. This could be managed by Groundwork Camden at a total cost of £60,000 per annum for three years.	Groundwork Camden	Long-term	£180k	

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the visitor Experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	10 № specific 'Gateway' improvements to key access points.	LB Camden LB Islington Developers Housing Associations	Short-term	£40k	
Industrial Frontage Improvements					
B1	Ericsson factory – boundary improvements and encouragement of use of space by employees.	British Waterways LB Camden Ericsson	Medium-term		
B2	Lyme Street builders yard owned by Lawfords Developers. Former - College Wharf – ideal interaction with waterside.		Long-term		Outline Costs: To be ascertained but section 106 monies to be tied to access improvements.
Graffiti Removal					
	General to length but particularly beneath bridges through Camden, Pirate Club, Southampton Grid and National Grid junction boxes.	Thames 21 London Borough British Waterways Railtrack National Grid	3 Year programme	£75k	
Key Site/Landscape Improvements					
	Reopen Canal Information Centre at Camden mentioned in UDP (see Suffolk Wharf/Camden Lock Cottage).	British Waterways Local business Developers	Medium-term	£?	
Degraded Sites or Canal Feature Improvements					
	Offside to west of Euston Rail bridge where former bridge abutments are evident – habitat and environmental improvements.	British Waterways Adjacent landowner LB Camden Railtrack	Short-term	£3k	
New or Improved Moorings					
	Specifically designed mooring to enable safe access to/from boats (linked to Camden Market access improvements) one at Camden Wharf and one at base of lock flight at College Street Bridge.	British Waterways Groundwork Camden	Short-term	£10k	
	Additional offside moorings at key points.	British Waterways	Long Term	£20k	

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the visitor Experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Community/Trip Boats	Develop specific boat taxi and landing to take customers between towpath and canal museum and Waterside Inn in Battlebridge Basin.	British Waterways Canal Museum Public House Management	Short-term	£15k	
Wider London - Canal/Waterway Links	Develop comprehensive and integrated network of circular walks focussing on the canal and exploiting the canal as a Green Chain. Produce walks leaflet – cross Borough.	**British Waterways** Borough Tourist Offices London Tourist Board London Walking Forum Local business LB Camden	Long-term		
	Develop use of towpath by cyclists to build on London Borough of Camden's identification of the Regent's Canal as a route for cyclists route to work. Promote safe use/courteous use by cyclists. Pilot project.	SUSTRANS LB Camden Healthy Cities Initiative	Long-term	£10k	
Healthy Living Area - Initiatives	Camden Healthy Cities Project – promotional initiative to encourage the increased recreational use of the canal particularly by ethnic communities (potential links with London Central Mosque)10 Mile 'Strolathon' to and from Regents Park.	LB Camden	All years	£8k	
Public Art programme	Community led Public Art Trail for Camden stretch identifying bridges/ local associations and links. Could be part of Strolathon route or Aga Khan Foundation walk.	British Waterways or Groundwork Camden Aga Khan Foundation Royal Parks London Muslim Community LB Camden	All years	£100k	

Map Ref №	Proposal : Signage/Bridge Naming	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Co-ordinated strategic initiative to resign all bridges along this section.	British Waterways Groundwork Camden National Grid	Short-term	£15k	

Map Ref №	Proposal : London Street Market Links	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Develop access/signage to promote Camden Market as a tourist destination linked to other London street markets by the canal. Promote retail boats and appropriate moorings.	British Waterways Local Business	Long-term	£5k?	

Map Ref №	Proposal : Heritage and Interpretation	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Heritage feature improvements					
	All significant heritage features along this section.	British Waterways	Long-term	£30k	
Heritage interpretation					
	Regent's Canal – 'History Rover' - CD. Concept for interpreting the canal avoiding the need for signs....sensors buried at key points triggers CD/tape players to play guide information. Also gives distance to next exit, music, bus and train station info, closest facilities.	British Waterways London Tourist Bureau Private Sponsorship London Boroughs London Museums Royal Parks Mile End Park	Long-term	£15k	
Canal Community Scrapbook/Local Distinctiveness Initiative					
	Engage local community particularly ethnic and people with disabilities in developing Camden and the canal as an area with local distinctiveness and local associations. Pilot project.	Groundwork Camden London Borough of Camden	Long-term		
Local History and Conservation Walks in and around the Regent's Canal					
	Bring together existing or develop comprehensive walking routes throughout area linking to canal. Combine on the leaflet.	London Borough of Camden	Medium-term	£20k	

Map Ref №	Proposal : Ecology and Wildlife and Maintenance	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Animal Ramps					
	Installed to complement horse ramps on key sections.	**British Waterways** London Ecology Unit London Borough of Camden	Short-term	£8k	

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Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Ecology and Wildlife and Maintenance	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Knotweed Control					
	Control Japanese knotweed where evident.	**British Waterways** Environment Agency London Ecology Unit	3 Year programme of eradication.	£3k	
Landscape and Habitat Creation					
	Offside corner of land adjacent to Oblique Bridge with access from Granary Street potential to be developed as annexe to Camley Street Eco Park.	**British Waterways** Camden??? Developers London Borough of Camden	Short-term	£15k	
	Create habitat for kingfishers and rare black redstart.		Short-term		
	Remove self sown Sycamore trees in retaining wall along towpath alongside Primrose Hill Primary School.	British Waterways	Short Term	£2k	
	Improve verges around Camden Market through re-seeding /maintenance regimes.	British Waterways	All years	£5k	
Aquatic Planting					
	Plant aquatic and emergent species where canal widens and in locks.	British Waterways	Short-term	£4k	
Mile End Park Ecology centre – canal project as link through Boroughs					
	Camley Street Ecology Centre – form links with Mile End Park Ecology Centre with the canal as a key focus and as a significant wildlife and educational resource across London. Links also established with Victoria Park in Tower Hamlets.	**Mile End Park Partnership** London Ecology Unit London Boroughs British Waterways English Nature	Long Term		Outline Cost: Scope of project to be determined. Appointment of Mile End Park Manager with initiative process Interpretation/education only/data capture.

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Section 106 Funding	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Suffolk Wharf redevelopment and British Waterways Camden Lock Cottage. Possible re-use as information centre and radio station.	Developer	Short-term		Access/environmental improvements??
	Lyme Street Builders yard.	Developer	Possibly Sept 2000 or Long-term	£?	Access/environmental improvements??
	Railway lands development (various).	Developer	Long-term	£?	Access/environmental improvements??

Map Ref №	Proposal : Section 106 Funding	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Gilbeys Yard Warehouse close to Hampstead Lock overlooking canal not yet refurbished.	Developer		£?	Access/environmental improvements??

Map Ref №	Proposal : Visitor and Community Safety Initiatives	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Guardians on the Waterway					
	A Canal Ranger for the King's Cross and Camden areas would provide a port of call for the local community regarding any canal matters, an educational resource for the local community and of course a pair of ears and eyes known to be patrolling the canal. Could be developed as a Community/Residents Association resource embracing the canal from adjacent housing estates.	British Waterways LB Camden LB Islington Neighbourhood Associations	Possible pilot project £30k first year.	Total £90k over 3 years	Negotiations required with local Neighbourhood Associations to progress this idea. There is a revenue implication here.
	A scheme to have 'Wardens' on the canal during the times for travel to and from school would provide a safe and fun commuter route for school children. These might be provided through a parents volunteer rota or as a paid part time post or possibly as part of a Canal Ranger's duties.	LB Camden LB Islington British Waterways Parents Association in particular for: St Michael's C of E Primary School Lady's RC Primary School Copenhagen Primary School Blessed Sacrament RC Primary School	Short / Medium-term		Negotiations required with local neighbourhood associations, education authority, head teachers and PTAs and police to progress this idea.
Safer Routes to School					
	Review and promote potential routes to schools along canal.	Local Education Authority		£10K	Camden primary school children have long distances to travel to school
Windows on the Waterway					
	Constitution public house beer garden would benefit from lowering of wall and introduction of railings.	British Waterways Constitution Public House LB Camden	Short-term	£15K	

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Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Visitor and Community Safety Initiatives	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Railings and retaining wall along Wharf Road – vegetation clearance and possible railing replacement. Panoramic views would then be exploited to St Pancras hotel and station, gas holders and city as well as local surveillance.	Developers British Waterways LB Camden St Pancras Cruising Club PADT National Freight Company London Continental Railways	Short-term	£30k	
	Conversion of Railway Co and Coal Offices with stables below. Appropriate detailing of windows – projecting or otherwise offer surveillance opportunities on this distinctive bend in canal.	Developer	Long-term		Outline Cost: Indeterminate.
	Visitor Centre building for Camley Street Natural Park – opportunity for views along canal.	Wildlife Trust	Medium-term		Outline Cost: Indeterminate.
	Former site of Goods Way Nature Areas potential for development of café/bar with surveillance in two directions from the offside	Wildlife Trust National Freight Company London Continental Railways			Outline Cost: Indeterminate. As a Short-term-term project, this area's frontage could be opened up to the canal and used as a sitting/eating area for workers on the development site.
	Great Northern Railway Freight Yard – overlooks St Pancras Lock – opportunity for views onto towpath				
	Open up brick balustrade of Pirates Castle to allow views of activity on waterspace.				Sensitive design of 'arrow slit' openings.
Blind Corners – Designing Out User Conflict.					
	Slowing of cyclists – blind corner/hazard warning at Bridges and advance warning for visually impaired users of low bridges (10 Nº)	British Waterways	Short-term	£15k	
Sustainable Routes to the City					
	Kings Cross Special Policy area will generate greater use of towpath as route to work. Identify and promote cross site links.	British Waterways London Continental Railways	Medium-term		Camden is an area of high public transport accessibility area.
Lighting – Canal Highlights		**British Waterways**			
	Bridge undercroft lighting to road and rail bridges through Camden Borough.	National Grid City of Westminster (revenue)	Short Term	£80k	
Education Pack					
	Update Regent's Education Pack as part of link with Ecology Centre at Mile End Park.				

Map Ref №	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Existing Access Point Improvements					
EA1	Maiden Lane Bridge (York Way) reconstruct ramp to remove stepped ramp to max 1:12 with landings for every 830 mm rise.	**British Waterways** London Continental Railways Housing Association LB Camden LB Islington	Short Term	£50k	Housing Association ownership. Strategic link to London attractions and at heart of important transport interchange. Link to water taxi to London Canal Museum.
EA2	Ramped and stepped access through Thornhill Bridge amenity space could be improved to meet full access standard for little coSt To improve safety and provide environmental enhancement the entire space and in particular the entrance from the road could be improved.	**British Waterways** LB Islington Peabody Trust?	Short Term	£30k	
EA3	Re-identify and create accessible route across tunnel through Islington to continue towpath as a strategic route.	**British Waterways** LB Islington	Short Term	£35k	Involve highway and estate improvements to obtain maximum appropriate access.
EA4	Minor improvements to the ramped access from Danbury Street particularly re-working of junction with towpath.	**British Waterways** LB Islington	Short Term	£5k	
EA5	Potential to re-work boundary wall to Hanover School to replace stepped access from Wharf Road (west) with a ramp to access standard. This would open up views from the road (see Windows on the Waterway alternative scheme below and open space improvement to City Basin).	**British Waterways** LB Islington Hanover School Pub Owners	Medium-term	£70k	
EA6	**Option 1** - Major redesign of intimidating ramped access from west side of Packington Street Bridge. Spring point to come directly from bridge creating a ramp to full access standard	**British Waterways** LB Islington	Short-term	£60k	Adjacent to community centre.
	Option 2 - Major re-design of playground and POS to the east of Packington St Bridge. Benefits will include opening up of canalside space and access to full standard (see comments).	**British Waterways** LB Islington Housing Association	Short-term	£120	This option would ideally lead to closure of west access.
EA7	Access from Colebrook Row – East end of tunnel – currently 1:6. Renew surface and explore incorporating a landing and handrail	**British Waterways** LB Islington	Short-term	£15k	Would never achieve standard but would improve for more users.
EA8	Ramp from Muriel Street to west Islington Tunnel portal could be regraded by exploiting the upper level path and making the existing alignment redundant. It would need to be done sensitively but could also improve safety and surveillance by including seating/viewing points for the tunnel entrance. Seating at towpath level could be removed.	**British Waterways** LB Islington Peabody Trust	Short-term	£40k	Needs to be done as part of wider improvements to detailing and setting of the tunnel portal and "voussoirs". See improvements to heritage structures.

9 Action Plan : Islington

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
New Access Points					
NA1	New access from Treaty Street alongside Copenhagen Primary School is underway. Possible opportunity to influence final design.	British Waterways LB Islington	Medium-term	£?	CPM Liaison needed as priority.
NA2	Potential to create new ramped access from New North Road Bridge (east) reworking the entrance from Baring Street in the process to allow views along towpath.	British Waterways New Deal for Shoreditch LB Hackney LB Islington Developer of Gainsborough Studios	Medium-term	£60k	
NA3	Reopen access between 21 and 47 Arlington Ave. as original access to pumping station and Union Wharf buildings adjacent to Sturt's Lock.	Developer British Waterways Housing Association	Long-term		Outline Cost: Low cost and could be done as part of renovation of Union Wharf.
NA4	Formalise and way-mark the road route to London Canal Museum from Maiden Lane Bridge. Pavement along approach to Museum requires work to improve access for people with disabilities.	London Canal Museum LB Islington British Waterways	Short-term	£?	Could be linked to London Canal Museum's SRB bid.
Other Access Improvements					
A1	Remove all gates along towpath and to access points through the Islington section	British Waterways	Short Term	£1.5	Requires detailed liaison between moorers, British Waterways, LB Islington and Islington Police.
A2	Explore regrading towpath alongside City Road lock to be nearer to full access standard and relay surface.	LB Islington British Waterways	Short / medium-term	£50k	Problems with cables but space is wide so there may be opportunity. Needs to be part of a comprehensive POS development here and linked to water taxi.
A3	Support Islington Tunnel water taxi (possibly running at weekends) see trip boat action below. Requires two new landings, one at Muriel Street, the other at City Road Basin, as part of Regent's Canal towpath Strategic Route.	London Canal Museum LB Islington British Waterways Discover Islington Local Business	Short-term	£?k	Refer to Strategic Analysis Plan.

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Upgrading Towpath to Access Standards	The towpath throughout is blighted by the presence of concrete paving slabs which follow the course of the National Grid cable line which is laid under the path. A mixture of materials have been used in conjunction with the concrete slabs resulting in an unattractive, poor quality pedestrian surface. A towpath improvements scheme is proposed as a priority throughout the London Borough of Islington to improve the image and character of the canal and create a user friendly environment striving where possible to meet 'Access for All' standards. Comprehensive resurfacing is required, in conjunction with rationalisation of the towpath delineation and width in order to both facilitate access and retain a sustainable grass strip. To include seating and passing places to "Access for All" standards.	British Waterways Groundwork LB Islington National Grid	Short-term	£200k	Negotiations are under way with National Grid who would be key partners in this project.
Programme Access Improvements	Initiative with local authority, local access groups and tourist office to provide information on access for people with disabilities.	British Waterways LB Islington Local Access Groups	Short-term	£20k	Key issue about Regents as a strategic route is that it is more beneficial to people with disabilities to travel west to east because of fall in topography from Camden to Limehouse
Strategic/Green Links	Metropolitan walks – Formalise route to link in with LB Camden's route from Bloomsbury through to Clerkenwell conservation area and back to the Regent's Canal at proposed water taxi point east of Islington tunnel.	Cross Borough Initiative Discover Islington London Tourist Board	Long-term	£?	

Map Ref №	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the visitor experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Total Costs for Boundary improvements	Estimated costs of pursuing individual canalside boundary improvements are difficult to determine without the owner's or tenant's involvement. It is proposed that the most effective way to take this forward would be through the creation of a boundary improvements initiative based on a 75% SRB grant scheme. This could be managed by Groundwork at a total cost of £60,000 per annum for three years.	**Groundwork Trust**	Long Term	£180k	
Industrial Frontage Improvements					

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the visitor experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Graffiti Removal					
	General to length but particularly beneath bridges through Islington, City Road Lock area, Packington Street Bridge, National Grid junction boxes and buildings.	Thames 21 London Borough of Islington British Waterways National Grid	3 Year programme	£75k	Requires reactive follow-up programme - revenue and management implications.
Key Site Landscape Improvements					
L1	At present there is a wall separating the majority of Tiber Gardens from the canal towpath. To open up views and improve on the security surveillance, the wall could be lowered and topped with railings. The towpath area could be improved to link with a new mooring/landing stage as part of water taxi service to London Canal Museum and waterside inn.	British Waterways Housing Association London Borough of Islington PADT Copenhagen Primary School Blessed Sacrement RC Primary School	Short-term	£55k	The park is presently owned by a Housing Association. There is an opportunity for artist and community involvement in the railing designs, perhaps including an artist residency period at a local school.
L2	Footpath links and improvement to canal side from Naish Court	**Groundwork** Guinness Trust	Short-term	£10k	
L3	Gateway features to 'Barnsbury' footpath links and improvement to canal side.	**Groundwork** Newlon Housing	Short-term	£20k	
L4	Gateway features to '10 Estates' footpath links and improvement to canal side.	**Groundwork** Peabody Trust	Short Term	£30k	
L5	Redesign and improve interface between Packington Square playgrounds and open space and canal as part of access improvements.	British Waterways Housing Association London Borough of Islington	Short-term	£120k	
L6	Treat embankments around western tunnel entrance as a discrete area of POS – thin planting, introduce interpretation and seating as improved setting for tunnel.	London Borough of Islington British Waterways	Short Term	£60k	
L7	Area of land above eastern tunnel portal to Islington Tunnel could be sensitively treated to create viewpoint.	**British Waterways** London Borough of Islington British Waterways		£15k	
L8	Towpath area around City Road Basin/ Hanover School – upgrade as Public Open Space.	British Waterways London Borough of Islington	Short-term	£90k	
Degraded Sites or Canal Feature Improvements					
	Sturts Lock lockside improvements	**British Waterways**		£12k	

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the visitor experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
New or Improved Moorings					
	Islington Tunnel trip boat mooring either end of tunnel to full access standard as alternative to route over through Islington	**British Waterways**		£ 5k	
	Initiate water taxi serving waterside inn, canal museum and towpath.	British Waterways London Canal Museum Waterside Inn	Short Term	£?k	Revenue implications - but could be part of London Canal Museum's SRB bid.
Community/Trip Boats					
Wider London - Canal/Waterway Links					
Healthy Living Area - Initiatives					
	Develop programme jogging/walking on this stretch of canal.	Healthy Cities Campaign British Waterways	Short Term	£6k	
Public Art Programme					
	Opportunity for public art trail that follows or guides the route across the tunnel through Islington but as part of the wider Regents Public Art programme. Could be integral or in support of an HLF bid to interpret the Regents canal's heritage.	**British Waterways** FreeForm LB Islington - Discover Islington	Short-term	£100k	

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Signage/Bridge Naming	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	As part of cross Borough strategy design and install appropriate, robust signage to all bridges.	British Waterways LB Islington			

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : London Street-Market Links	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Develop way marked links to Camden Passage and Chapel Street markets in Islington and promote on the waterway as part of wider strategy.	Discover Islington Street Traders	Medium-term	£20k	

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Heritage and interpretation	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Heritage Feature Improvements	Improve setting, parapet and road level access for western end of Islington Tunnel entrance.	Peabody Trust	Short Term	£45k	
Heritage Interpretation	Interpretation of Islington Tunnel and local history.	LB Islington British Waterways Peabody Trust	Short Term	£15k	
Canal Community Scrapbook/Local Distinctiveness Initiative					
	Limited to main housing areas.	FreeForm Common Ground	Long-term	£18k	
Local History and Conservation Walks in and around the Regent's Canal					
	Produce comprehensive walks leaflet that focuses on the canal including the New River (Long Distance Walk) Barnsbury Walk, The Angel Trail and the Clerkenwell Historic Trail.	**British Waterways** **Discover Islington The Real London** London Borough of Islington London Tourist Bureau London Canal museum Local Businesses	Long-term	£20k	

Map Ref №	Proposal : Ecology and Wildlife and Maintenance	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Animal Ramps	To complement horse ramps on key sections such as:	British Waterways	Short-term		
Landscape and habitat creation	Encourage vegetation along Caledonian Road. Install bird and bat boxes.	British Waterways London Borough of Islington	Medium-term	£6k	
Aquatic planting	Emergent planting to York Way – Caledonian Road section.	London Borough of Islington	Short-term	£3k	
Bio-diversity	Improve bio-diversity in Battlebridge and City Road Basin with bird roots and emergent vegetation.	London Borough of Islington	Short-term		

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Ecology and Wildlife and Maintenance	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Bats	Install bat bricks to support colonies if evident in Islington Tunnel.	British Waterways	Short-term	£1.5k	
Mile End Park Ecology Centre – canal project as link through Boroughs	Islington has little open space and Borough keen to promote strategic recreational opportunities for residents. Canal is also site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation. Initiate Eco Project across Borough's with links to local schools with Mile End Park Ecology centre and the canal as the focus	Mile End Park Partnership London Ecology Unit London Boroughs British Waterways English Nature		£10k	
Offside woodland management schemes					

Map Ref №	Proposal : Section 106 Funding	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Buildings comprising Union Wharf – planning permission for residential.	Developer British Waterways	Intermediate		

Map Ref №	Proposal : Visitor and Community Safety Initiatives	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Guardians on the Waterway	A Canal Ranger for the Islington area would provide a port of call for the local community regarding any canal matters, an educational resource for the local community and of course a pair of ears and eyes known to be patrolling the canal. Could be developed as a Community/ Residents Association resource embracing the canal from adjacent housing estates.	British Waterways London Borough of Islington Neighbourhood Associations			Outline Cost: Possible pilot project £30k first year. Outline Cost: There is a revenue implication here. Negotiations required with local Neighbourhood Associations to progress this idea.
Safer Routes to School	Review and promote potential routes to schools along canal.	Local Education Authority	Medium-term		
Windows on the Waterway	Extend this initiative at key points such as bridge parapets, Hanover School, Packington POS and playgrounds.	British Waterways Groundwork Trusts Local Business	Short Term	£15k	

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Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Visitor and Community Safety Initiatives	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Home Zones	Develop home zones along Muriel Street in partnership with Peabody Trust.	Peabody Trust London Borough of Islington British Waterways	Medium-term		
Lighting – Canal Highlights	Review, design and install undercroft lighting to bridges.	British Waterways National Grid Groundwork LB Islington	Short Term	£25k	
User conflict management	Slowing of cyclists – blind corner/hazard warning at bridges.			£1.5k	
Community Ownership Scheme	Work with King's Cross 10 Estates to encourage use and sense of ownership of canal.	Peabody Trust British Waterways London Borough of Islington	Short-term	£?k	

Action Plan : Hackney 9

Map Ref №	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Existing Access Point Improvements					
EA1	Open space to west of Whitmore Bridge part of De Beauvoir Town estate re-worked to allow ramped access to towpath, to replace steps.	**British Waterways** Housing Association New Deal	Short Term	£50k	Outline Cost: Not including POS
EA2	Rosemary Branch Bridge replace steps with ramped access.	**British Waterways**	Medium-term	£30k	
EA3	East of Queensbridge Road ramp to replace existing ramp not to access standard.	**British Waterways**	Medium-term	£30k	
EA4	Include landing to Broadway Market ramp to bring to standard.	**British Waterways**	Medium-term	£10k	
EA5	Proposed ramp to replace steps at Viner St Bridge.	**British Waterways**	Medium-term	£30k	
New Access Points					
NA1	Strongroom development proposal could allow new bridge access across Kingsland Basin (Section 196 monies).	**British Waterways** LB Hackney Strongroom New Deal for Shoreditch	Medium-term	£?K	
NA2	New bridge across canal at Hertford Road as part of Sec 106 from development on Osram Road.	**New Deal for Shoreditch**	Medium-term		
Other Access Improvements					
A1	Haggerston and Stonebridge access to the canal Millennium Bid CHECK	London Borough of Hackney	Medium-term	£?	
A2	**Option 1** -Explore possibility of regrading Actons Lock which is particularly steep ie 1:6 for only 5 m.	**British Waterways**	Medium-term	£15k	
	Option 2 – To provide an accessible route by passing Actons Lock develop safe route along Regents Row between Broadway market and Queens Bridge Road.	**British Waterways**			Possibly develop as a "Home Zone"

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Upgrading Towpath to Access Standards	The towpath throughout is blighted by the presence of concrete paving slabs which follow the course of the National Grid cable line which is laid under the path. A mixture of materials have been used in conjunction with the concrete slabs resulting in an unattractive, poor quality pedestrian surface. A towpath improvements scheme is proposed as a priority throughout the London Borough of Hackney to improve the image and character of the canal and create a user friendly environment striving where possible to meet 'Access for All' standards. Comprehensive resurfacing is required, in conjunction with rationalisation of the towpath delineation and width in order to both facilitate access and retain a sustainable grass strip.	British Waterways Groundwork London Borough of Hackney National Grid New Deal for Shoreditch		£200k	Negotiations are under way with National Grid who would be key partners in this project.
Programme Access Improvements	Initiative with local authority, local access groups and tourist office to provide information on Access for people with disabilities.	LB Hackney Local Access Groups London Tourist Bureau	Medium Term	£20k	Key issue about Regent's Canal as a strategic route is that it is more beneficial to people with disabilities to travel west to east because of fall in topography from Camden to Limehouse.
Strategic/Green Links	Metropolitan walks – Formalise route to link in with LB Camden's route from Bloomsbury through to Clerkenwell Conservation Area. Route could extend east through to Shoreditch and City fringe area	City Fringe Cross Borough		£?	

Map Ref №	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the Visitor experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Boundary Improvements					
B1	Haggerstone Estates and Dunston Road - railings and boundary in need of improvement visually with better physical access to/from the canal.	New Deal for Shoreditch? Haggerstone SRB		£120k	
Total Costs for Boundary Improvements	Estimated costs of pursuing individual canalside boundary improvements are difficult to determine without the owner's or tenant's involvement. It is proposed that the most effective way to take this forward would be through the creation of a boundary improvements initiative based on a 75% SRB grant scheme. This could be managed by Groundwork at a total cost of £60,000 per annum for 3 years.	New Deal for Shoreditch Developers	Long-term	£180k	

Map Ref №	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the Visitor experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Industrial Frontage Improvements					
	Council owned land between Cat & Mutton Bridge and Viner Street Bridge require various frontage improvements. Extent needs determining.	New Deal for Shoreditch? Haggerstone SRB	Long-term	£150k	
Graffiti Removal					
	General to length but particularly beneath bridges and on retaining walls, National Grid junction boxes and structures.	Thames 21 London Borough of Hackney New Deal for Shoreditch National Grid	3 Year programme	£75k	
Key Site Landscape Improvements					
L1	Garages at Regents Court, Haggerstone Estate CHECK detract from canal environment – demolish and re-work as open space.	-	?	£15k	
L2	Land either side of Haggerston Road Bridge.	To be identified		£8k	
L3	Parcel of land east of Kingsland Road bridge environmental improvements.	New Deal for Shoreditch	Long-term	£8k	
L4	De Beauvoir Town estate POS near Whitmore Bridge re-worked to encourage greater interaction with canal and overlooking of towpath.	Estate Action? **New Deal for Shoreditch** **New Deal for Shoreditch**		£100k	
L5	Garages close to Kenning House (offside) CHECK	British Waterways	Short-term		
L6	Derelict garages/play area near Granville Court CHECK	British Waterways		£8k	
L7	Open space at corner of Wiltshire Row and Bridport Place – environmental improvements. CHECK	British Waterways Crown and Manor Boys Club?		£8k	
Degraded Sites or Canal Feature Improvements					
New or Improved Moorings					
	Whiston Road - Possible offside moorings in front of Blisworth, Cheddington and Cosgrove flats.	British Waterways	Long-term	£25k	
	Moorings close to Rosemary Branch Pub Theatre.	British Waterways	Short-term	£25k	
Wider London - Canal/Waterway Links					

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Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the Visitor experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Healthy Living Area - Initiatives Tai Chi Public Open Space and promotion of walking and jogging on towpath.	British Waterways New Deal for Shoreditch			
	Public Art Programme Opportunity for public art trail extending into the neighbouring estates but as an integral part of the wider Regents Public Art programme. Could also be part of an HLF bid to interpret the Regents canal's heritage.	British Waterways Housing Trusts New Deal for Shoreditch		£?	

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Signage/Bridge Naming	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Comprehensive re-signing of bridges in appropriate style - co-ordinated as part of pan-Borough initiative.	British Waterways London Boroughs	Short Term	£30k	

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : London Street-Market links	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Develop signage and interpretation to form link with Hoxton Street Market and Broadway Market – new flower market on Saturdays – could be extended down to the canalside to market boats	British Waterways	Short Term	£10k	

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Heritage and interpretation	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Heritage Feature Improvements				
	Heritage Interpretation				
	Canal Community Scrapbook/Local Distinctiveness Initiative				
	Local History and Conservation Walks in and around the Regent's Canal				

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Ecology and Wildlife and Maintenance	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Animal Ramps					
	To complement horse ramps on key sections such as				
Landscape and Habitat Creation					
	Encourage vegetation along Baring Street with native planting.		Medium-term	£10k	
Aquatic Planting					
	Targeted between Haggerston Bridge and Queen Road Bridge	British Waterways	Short-term	£5k	
Mile End Park Ecology Centre – canal project as link through Boroughs					
	Include Shoreditch and Haggerston Parks and Community Farm and canal as part of cross Borough exchange of information and Canal Biodiversity project centred at Mile End Park Ecology Centre.	Mile End Park Partnership London Ecology Unit London Boroughs British Waterways New Deal for Shoreditch English Nature	Medium-term		
Offside Woodland Management Schemes					
	Naturalised trees on offside bank in front of Cheddington , Cosgrove and Blisworth flats.	British Waterways Haggerstone Canalside Housing Trust?	Short Term	£?	
	Agree strategy for thinning and Long-term management or development as dedicated POS for residents.				

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Section 106 funding	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	48-48a Eagle Wharf Road?				
	Gainsborough Studios – possible moorings or access improvements				
	Columbia and Brunswick Wharf currently empty warehouses.				
	Acton Lock.				
	Spice Wharf and 293-297 Kingsland Road have possible £14k section 106 money ring fenced to be spent on improving the canal and basin.			£14k	
	Strongroom development of Reliance Wharf Hertford Road, Kingsland Basin.				
	Ada Street London Wharf east of Cat & Mutton Bridge	Peabody Trust			
	213/215 New North Road				

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Visitor and Community Safety Initiatives	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Guardians on the Waterway	A Canal Ranger for the Hackney/Shoreditch area would provide a port of call for the local community regarding any canal matters, an educational resource for the local community and of course a pair of ears and eyes known to be patrolling the canal. Could be developed as a Community/Residents Association resource embracing the canal from adjacent housing estates. Will link in with specific project in New Deal for Shoreditch's Delivery Plan – Community Safety in Shoreditch	British Waterways New Deal for Shoreditch - Neighbourhood Associations			Outline Cost: Possible pilot project £30k first year. Outline Cost: There is a revenue implication here. Negotiations required with local Neighbourhood Associations to progress this idea.
Safer Routes to School	Develop safe routes along towpath with local communities, schools and Ndf Shoreditch project officers	British Waterways LB Hackney New Deal for Shoreditch	Medium-term	£10k	
Windows on the Waterway	Identify, design and implement windows on waterway and viewing bridge parapets.	British Waterways New Deal	Short Term	£60k	
Home Zones	Haggerstone Estate from Queens Road Bridge east traffic free estate access road as part of POS and boundary improvements.	British Waterways Housing Associations LB Hackney	Short Term	£80k	
Sustainable Routes to the City	Identify sign and promote North-South routes to work in the City. These may use sections of the canal and will be integral to the access improvement strategy. Developing a cycling policy for key sections and identify and resolve points of conflict.	New Deal for Shoreditch	Long Term	£?	
Lighting – Canal Highlights					
	Install undercroft lighting to key bridges.	National Grid British Waterways New Deal	Short Term	£50k	
User Conflict Management					
	Slowing of cyclists – blind corner/hazard warning at Bridges	British Waterways Groundwork New Deal	Short Term	£20k	
Community Ownership Scheme	Via New Deal for Shoreditch and priority estates develop canal ownership scheme.	New Deal for Shoreditch	Medium-term	£?k	

Action Plan : Tower Hamlets 9

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Existing Access Point Improvements					
EA1	Three access point improvements into Victoria Park – minor re-profiling and entrance changes.	**British Waterways** LB Tower Hamlets	Short Term	£5k	
EA2	Four major towpath access improvements to be carried out by Mile End Park.	**Mile End Park** SUSTRANS?	Short Term	£20k	Early liaison with Mile End Park.
EA3	Alternative route around Salmon Lane Lock.	**British Waterways**		£8k	
New Access Points					
NA1	Develop alternative routes using Victoria Park and Wennington Green in order to access the Hertford Union and to avoid problem with levels over the Hertford Union bridge.	**British Waterways** LB Tower Hamlets (Highways) Mile End Park SUSTRANS	Medium-term	£32k	Early liaison requested with Hackney Highways Section, Mile End Park, Access Groups, SUSTRANS. Toucan crossing may be needed.
NA2	Bridge across canal from SHADA housing.	SHADA	Short-term	£60k	
NA3	Bridge crossing from Queen Mary Hospital complex.	Queen Mary Hospital British Waterways	Short-term	£60k	Links between POS on west side of hospital grounds to Mile End Park.
NA4	Bridge crossing from Ocean Estate/Meath Gardens.	British Waterways	Short-term	£60k	
NA5	Mile End Lock is difficult to re-profile but route around to grade could be achieved by the Mile End Park partnership.	**Mile End Park**	Short-term	£20k	Priority - British Waterways/Mile End Park early liaison required.
Other Access Improvements					
A1	Remove all motorbike barriers.	**British Waterways** LB Tower Hamlets	Short-term	£2k	
A2	Explore opportunities for exploring the Regent's Canal using mobility buses that already operate to overcome some of the difficult access sections.	London Transport LB Tower Hamlets	Short-term	£?k	Part of Programme Access Improvement for Regent's Canal Full Access work.
A3	Develop alternative access routes using Lovell Street and Copperfield Road.	British Waterways LB Tower Hamlets (Highways)	Short term	£80k	
Upgrading Towpath to Access Standards					
	Upgrade priority lengths of Regent's Canal alongside Mile End Park as part of strategic link along the Hertford Union. SUSTRANS have potential match funding. If funding is not available from SUSTRANS resurfacing changed to Long-term aspiration. Length of towpath that is inaccessible to wheelchair users is 2.4 km.	British Waterways SUSTRANS Mile End Park LB Tower Hamlets	Short-term	£25-30k	Match from SUSTRANS.

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Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Towpath and Access Improvements	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Programme Access Improvements					
	Initiative with local authority, local access groups and tourist office to provide information on access for people with disabilities.	British Waterways Mile End Park All London Boroughs London Transport	Short Term	£20k	Regent's Canal - Full Access Walk. Key issue about Regent's Canal as a strategic route is that it is more beneficial to people with disabilities to travel west to east because of fall in topography from Camden to Limehouse.
Strategic/Green Links					
S1	Metropolitan walks – formalise route to link in with Shoreditch and City fringe area including Stepney.	All London Boroughs Mile End Park London Tourist Bureau		£30k	
S2	Complete and waymark links with Thames Path at the Limehouse Basin junction.	LB Tower Hamlets Developer British Waterways	Medium-term	£5k	
S3	'Ocean North' - New Deal for Communities opportunity to establish routes to the canal and links with Community.			£?k	

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the visitor experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Boundary Improvements					
	Stephen Harris School canal frontage - develop into school/community resource.	Stephen Harris School FreeForm BW	Short Term	£30k	
Industrial Frontage Improvements					
Graffiti Removal					
	Limited problem along this section but focus on bridge and undercrofts.	BW	Short Term	£40k	
Key Site Landscape Improvements					
L1	Essian Street Gas Works site Stepney SRB Round 1 potential for wildlife habitat creation and canal access improvement.	**LB Tower Hamlets**			

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Map Ref №	Proposal : Environmental Improvements (Enhancing the visitor experience)	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
L2	Meath Gardens local park/green corridor.	**London Borough of Tower Hamlets** British Waterways Mile End Park			
L3	Create "gateway" features on towpath to announce Mile End Park.	British Waterways Mile End Park FreeForm	Medium-term	£100k	
New or Improved Moorings					
	Mile End Basin – SHADA housing.	SHADA Mile End Park British Waterways Brewery	Short Term	?	
	Marina at top end of park.	British Waterways	Medium-term	£	
	Offside moorings associated with 'west bank' development.	British Waterways SHADA Bellways			
Community/Trip Boats					
Wider London - Canal/Waterway Links					
	Develop 'London Ring' – linking with Poplar-Harker Housing Association and Water City.	British Waterways Poplar-Harker Housing Association Mile End Park	Medium-term	£	Opportunity to bring visitors via trip boat to Mile End Park.
Healthy Living Area – Initiatives					
Public Art Programme					
	Opportunity for public art trail extending into Mile End Park and the neighbouring estates but as an integral part of the wider Regent's Canal Public Art programme. Could also be part of an HLF bid to interpret the Regent's Canal heritage.	**FreeForm** **British Waterways** Housing Trusts – SHADA Developers – Bellways Ocean Estate New Deal Mile End Park	Short Term	£?	

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Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Signage/Bridge Naming	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Comprehensive bridge signing/naming as part of strategic initiative.	British Waterways	Short Term	£30k	

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Heritage and Interpretation	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Heritage Feature Improvements Lockside improvements to three locks on this section.	British Waterways Mile End Park Developer Groundwork Trust	Short Term	£180k	
	Heritage Interpretation Develop strategic interpretation strategy covering the Regent's Canal with specific Mile End Park themes - extending Ragged School exhibition into public arena.	Ragged School Mile End Park British Waterways English Heritage	Short Term	£100k	
	Canal Community Scrapbook/Local Distinctiveness Initiative Extend Ragged School "living history" into new communities developing around the canal with the Regent's Canal as main theme.	Mile End Park SHADA British Waterways Bellways New Real Ocean Estate	Medium-term	£20k	
	Local History and Conservation Walks in and around the Regent's Canal Part of strategic initiative (see Strategic Actions) develop into communities wither side of canal into Limehouse and across to "Water City".	British Waterways Local History Groups London Boroughs	Long-term	£15k	

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Ecology and Wildlife and Maintenance	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Animal Ramps To complement horse ramps on key sections such as _____.				

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Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Ecology and Wildlife and Maintenance	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Knotweed Control					
Landscape and Habitat Creation					
Aquatic Planting	Planting particularly on offside opposite Victoria Park and in canal wides.		Short	£3k	
Mile End Park Ecology Centre – Canal Project as Link Through Boroughs	Mile End Park has an Ecology Centre that could become educational and community resource/tourist attraction that focuses on the Regent's Canal. Links could be established through the Boroughs linking up with Royal Parks amongst others.	Mile End Park Partnership London Ecology Unit London Boroughs British Waterways English Nature			
Bio-diversity	Increase bio-diversity of towpath verges with alternative management regimes and planting.		Short-term		
Bats	Install bat boxes/bricks to suitable buildings and trees.	Various	Short-term	£3k	

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Section 106 Funding	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Bellway's development of Essian Street Gas Works.	Bellways	Medium-term		

Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Visitor and Community Safety Initiatives	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
Guardians on the Waterway	Develop joint community safety patrols of towpath and environs with Mile End Park Rangers.	British Waterways Mile End Park Metropolitan Police LB Tower Hamlets	Medium-term		Match status of Mile End Park. Rangers to Royal Park Police??

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Map Ref Nº	Proposal : Visitor and Community Safety Initiatives	Potential Partners (Delivery Agency in Bold)	Timescale/ Priority	Outline Cost	Comments
	Safer routes to School Develop routes across canal on new bridges if appropriate.	Local Education Authority British Waterways Mile End Park Developer	Long Term		
	Windows on the Waterway Identify those bridge parapets that would permit better surveillance if lowered/made visually permeable.	British Waterways			
	Sustainable Routes to the City Explore creation of east-west commuter routes or sections that use the canal.	British Waterways Partners (various)	Long-term		
	Lighting – Canal Highlights				
	User Conflict Management Slowing of cyclists – blind corner/ hazard warning at Bridge			£1.5k	
	Community Ownership Scheme				
	Education Pack				